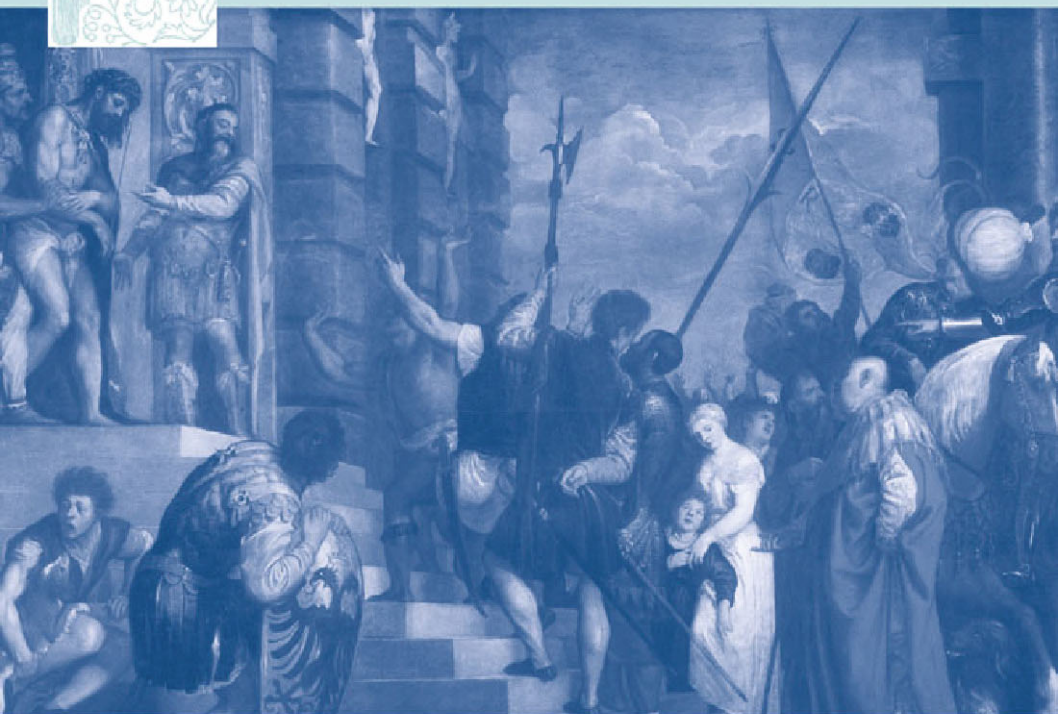




EARLY MODERN CULTURAL STUDIES, 1500–1700



ISLAM AND EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

THE POLITICS OF ROMANCE
FROM SPENSER TO MILTON

BENEDICT S. ROBINSON



EARLY MODERN CULTURAL STUDIES

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SERIES EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The Early Modern Cultural Studies series is dedicated to the exploration of literature, history, and culture in the context of cultural exchange and globalization. We begin with the assumption that in the twenty-first century, literary criticism, literary theory, historiography, and cultural studies have become so interwoven that we can now think of them as an eclectic and only loosely unified (but still recognizable) approach to formerly distinct fields of inquiry such as literature, society, history, and culture. This series furthermore presumes that the early modern period was witness to an incipient process of transculturation through exploration, mercantilism, colonization, and migration that set into motion a process of globalization that is still with us today. The purpose of this series is to bring together this eclectic approach, which freely and unapologetically crosses disciplinary, theoretical, and political boundaries, with early modern texts and artifacts that bear the traces of transculturation and globalization.

This process can be studied on a large as well as on a small scale, and the books in this series are dedicated to both. It is just as concerned with the analyses of colonial encounters and native representations of those encounters as it is with representations of the other in Shakespeare, gender politics, the cultural impact of the presence of strangers/foreigners in London, or the consequences of farmers' migration to that same city. This series is as interested in documenting cultural exchanges between British, Portuguese, Spanish, or Dutch colonizers and native peoples as it is in telling the stories of returning English soldiers who served in foreign armies on the continent of Europe in the late sixteenth century.

IVO KAMPS
Series Editor

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An earlier version of chapter 1 appeared as "The 'Secret Faith' of Spenser's Saracens" in *Spenser Studies* 17 (New York: AMS Press, 2003), pp. 37–74. A different version of chapter 4 appears as "The 'Turks,' Caroline Politics, and Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*," in *Localizing Caroline Drama*, ed. Alan Farmer and Adam Zucker (New York: Palgrave, 2006). The cover image, Titian's *Ecce homo* of 1543, appears courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.

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INTRODUCTION



ROMANCE, THE “TURK,” AND EUROPE

When Othello confronts Desdemona about her lost handkerchief, he notoriously describes it as a magical object made of hallowed silk, dyed in a substance conserved from the mummified hearts of virgins, and sewn by a sibyl in her “prophetic fury.” At this moment, Othello rhetorically or perhaps compulsively affiliates himself with the most alien version of his past, a feminized Egyptian scene of sorcery and demonic magic. As he does so, he also alludes to one of the most famous romances of the sixteenth century, Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*: the “prophetic fury” of Othello’s sibyl is also the “furor profetico” of Ariosto’s Cassandra, as she sews the canopy under which the converted Saracen hero Ruggiero marries the Christian woman warrior Bradamante at the poem’s end.¹ Cassandra’s embroidery envisions the dynasty that will derive from this mixed marriage, the Estes who were Ariosto’s patrons; her weaving thus mirrors Ariosto’s text in imagining—fabricating—a long and glorious future. But what does Othello’s sibyl see, in her own “prophetic fury”? The phrase seems strangely misplaced, in the context of a marriage that will produce no descendents and that may never even have been consummated. In dynastic terms, there would seem to be nothing to see here; or, if the sibyl did see something, her vision—like the classical Cassandra, rather than Ariosto’s romanticized revision—is powerless to affect that history, to avert the catastrophe whose vehicle will be the handkerchief she weaves.

In another sense, however, the allusion to Ariosto’s romance precisely constructs the meaning of Shakespeare’s tragedy. In these lines,

“the most romantic of Shakespeare’s heroes” begins to pull apart the romance fictions that had provided the narrative of his life and had justified his precarious position as “the Moor of Venice.”² Othello’s tragedy becomes the unraveling of Ariosto’s romance of miscegenated desire, momentarily symbolized in the very different fates of these two pieces of foreign fabric. Where Ariosto fantasizes an erotic, dynastic, and political incorporation of the “Saracen” world by way of its most powerful hero, Shakespeare dramatizes the failure of this romance and the descent of his Moorish general into murder and suicide. The two texts finally articulate very different versions of the encounter between Europe and the Moor or the Saracen—a difference that expresses itself through a relationship to literary genres, and above all to romance.³

This book argues that the genre of romance shapes early modern identities in the scene of cross-cultural encounter. Romance was the preeminent literary form through which medieval Christendom had imagined its global contacts and conflicts, and it was a form that continued to provide important resources for literary production and innovation in the early modern period. But in the sixteenth century, religious war and commercial and colonial expansion radically altered the terms of Europe’s encounter with the world. This book will show how early modern writers engaged and adapted the literary form of romance in order to rethink the forms of identity at a moment of cultural and ideological crisis. Romance enabled fraught conversations about identity and difference: like Shakespeare adapting Ariosto for a narrative in many ways antithetical to the *Orlando Furioso*, early modern authors sought to appropriate, to reinvent, or to repudiate romance, in the effort to reimagine a changing world. In this context, to think about genre is to explore the multiple relationships between a text, its immediate historical moment, and a literary and cultural history that extends all the way from the crusades to the first phases of colonization. To think about genre in this way is not to retreat from history but to recognize more fully the extent of the text’s embeddedness in history. Genre encodes a relationship between past, present, and future, a sedimented polytemporality that can take us beyond studying representations of difference to tracing how global identities were rethought and transformed, between the Middle Ages and modernity, as early modern authors translated and redispersed the material of romance into new forms.

Identified in the early modern period with the most flagrant violations of verisimilitude—emblematically condensed by Italian critics to that moment in the *Aeneid* when ships are turned into nymphs—romance continues to be read as the literary form in which fantasy

remakes the world according to its own demands.⁴ As such, it has seemed one of the most problematic genres, the one perhaps least easily reduced to any list of specific formal features: it is identified with certain kinds of narrative and certain structures of feeling, but these can inhabit very different kinds of text—poetry, prose, drama—with very different styles, plots, or subject matters. Moreover, analyses of romance frequently metamorphose into broad discussions about fictiveness itself, so that romance often seems to become a stand-in for all mimetic literature. Romance also tends to surface in texts apparently foreign to its demands: as in the case of *Othello*, traces of romance have a way of infiltrating and shaping texts that seem remote from any formal conception of the genre. The term "romance," finally, ramifies over time into a bewildering variety of different kinds of fiction, from the *Odyssey* to Greek romances to medieval chivalry to pastoral romance to late Shakespeare to tragicomedy to modern genres including Harlequin romances and science fiction.⁵ In the face of such heterogeneity, can we think that there might be any one such thing as "romance"?

My argument will confine itself to one particular moment in the history of romance, the early modern rewriting of medieval chivalric narratives.⁶ In that moment, the genre of romance enabled new ways of thinking about identity and difference, embodied above all in fictions of encounter with Saracens, Moors, and Turks. That romance encodes forms of cross-cultural experience is in some ways implicit in Northrop Frye's conception of it as based on the form of the quest, which centers the genre on travel and on the experience of the strange and the remote. The quest narrative divides the world between a stable metropolitan center, the source of all lasting values, and a wilderness, the space of the quest itself, which is also the space that tests metropolitan values.⁷ Even if, as in Spenser, we never arrive at that center point, its existence is continuously implied by the narrative, and we are continuously invited to imagine its possibility. We might therefore well expect romances to emerge around moments of contact, moments of expansion, moments opening the possibility of new global or cosmopolitan identities, moments in which travel and the other place take on a renewed cultural and psychic resonance.

The formal features of romance regularly singled out by early modern critics—its multiple, sprawling plots, its exoticism, its love of long journeys to enchanted places—themselves suggest a kind of capaciousness, a wide-ranging imagination that conceives of the text as "a little world."⁸ The quest narratives of romance emplot an outward movement that is also an effort to encompass the world, to take imaginative control over it, to figure or refigure the relationships that

obtain between home and the foreign place—a global impulse whose emblem is perhaps Ruggiero’s circumnavigation of the world, what Ariosto describes as his “global course” (10.70). From Cervantes to Frye to Foucault, romance has been called “extravagant”; this perhaps has to do not only with its embrace of an often errant fictionality but also with its investment in the experience of the foreign, its fascination with “extravagant and wheeling” strangers.⁹ Romance estranges the world it represents, suffusing its landscapes with wonder, with the marvelous or the miraculous: the experience of difference here is especially the experience of radical difference, a sense that the world is on the threshold of the divine or the demonic. Frye maintained that romance is the first literary form because it is the form that mediates between theogony and human experience; it translates mythical narratives into what we can first truly call literature, and thereby seeks to accommodate the divine to the human.¹⁰ This description has its uses for a historical reading of early modern romance: romance is the genre in which difference is explored in its most radical forms, the genre in which the other is always potentially revealed as absolutely other, as embodying a kind of theologized difference.

As the literary form that thinks most intensely about difference, romance evokes characteristically mixed moods: love and war, conversion and crusade, seduction and violence. It does not merely represent difference but attempts to think difference in its widest possible significance. It provides a cultural space within which competing forms of identity can be imagined, at a moment when the boundaries of human belonging were being radically transformed. The history of early modern romance is also a history of changing concepts of religion, race, gender, and nation. The expansiveness of romance, its tendency to wander in unexpected directions, makes it the perfect literary embodiment for the complex and changing ways in which global identities were being explored in the early modern period.

The global investments of early modern romance have led to a number of readings emphasizing the imaginative centrality of the New World.¹¹ While I don’t want to deny that romance helped shape the encounter with the New World, or that romance was in turn shaped by that encounter, these arguments have meant that chivalric romance’s earliest cross-cultural engagement has tended to be downplayed or forgotten. The medieval and early modern literary form perhaps most familiar as romance emerged during and after the crusades, in the effort to narrate contacts with Islam: the fictions of chivalric romance are a response to the failure of the crusades, acts of collective cultural fantasy that seek to take imaginative possession of the long and fluctuating

border between Latin Christendom and Islam.¹² If romance evokes the space of contact and encounter, late medieval and early modern romance takes as paradigmatic the encounter with Islam.

If we want to come to terms with the cultural significance of early modern romance, we must confront the "Saracen," the "Moor," or the "Turk" who inhabits these texts, the overdetermined figure of religious, racial, and cultural difference around whom the romance narrative revolves. That figure encodes a set of conflicts that asks us to look both outward from England to the zone of contact with Islam and back from that contact zone toward an England itself riven by forms of difference. At stake in the figure of the "Turk" is the possibility of Englishness itself. Early modern romance is the scene of real and lasting struggles, not the insulated realm of fantasy it has too often been taken to be, even in readings that would be sensitive to its historical investments.

The romance Turk embodies a sedimented history that layers both contemporary experiences of contact and a longer literary history formed by experiences of conflict and encounter extending back to the crusades and outward to the whole Islamic world. This sedimentation is signaled in part in the multiple meanings of the word "Turk." That word could designate a particular figure of racial, cultural, and religious difference, the inhabitant of Turkey, whether ethnically Turkish or otherwise incorporated into the multiethnic Ottoman Empire. Such a figure evokes a complex set of associations: the Turk was variously an enemy, a rival, a trading partner, and a diplomatic and military ally.¹³ But the word "Turk" might also gesture toward the much wider horizons of the Islamic world, in this functioning very much like the medieval word "Saracen" or even the modern usage of "Arab": all three words at once name an ethnicity or a group of ethnicities united by language, and also seek to name the whole Islamic world, that is, to produce a version of the "Islamic world," to impose a fantasy of that world onto a heterogeneous collection of cultures, histories, and encounters. In a sense, Europe has always refused to treat Islam as a religion at all, preferring to inscribe it into theories of racial, political, and cultural difference, and thereby refusing to acknowledge Islam's own claims to universality while at the same time insisting that it is always the same, across vast reaches of time and space.¹⁴ The bad faith of this gesture in important ways enables the complementary fantasy of a coherent Europeanness, as I will suggest later.

Although romance is a term that diffuses itself across a long history, the romances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tell a particular story, shaped by a constant negotiation between two competing

pressures. The first pressure was an expanding global market. Here, the English encounter with Islam occupies a privileged position, for two reasons, one historical, the other literary and cultural. Historically, North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean were crucial sites for English commercial expansion. New trades with Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Morocco inaugurated England's entry into new forms of global commerce and thereby also inaugurated new forms of English consumption. English texts from Robert Wilson's play *The Three Ladies of London* to William Lithgow's travel narratives worry about the impact of new patterns of consumption on the English economy and English culture. Wilson and Lithgow gender this anxiety, seeing unruly female desire as the motor of economic novelty: in Wilson's play, Lady Lucre dispatches an Italian merchant to Istanbul to vent good English commodities in return for "bables, coloured bones, glasse beades to make bracelettes withall: / For euery day Gentlewomen of England doe aske for such trifles."¹⁵ Lithgow, visiting the island of Zante, notes the English desire for currants, condemning the "sensuall prodigality" that drives this "female Traffike."¹⁶

The Levant and North African trades also enabled the accumulation of the capital that launched the East India Company, and thereby partly financed the early development of English merchant empire.¹⁷ Contrary to what is sometimes assumed, the overland Asian trade routes that culminated in Ottoman ports did not disappear when Portuguese ships started sailing around Africa to access eastern goods in China and South Asia; those trade routes proved resilient, and were not significantly affected until well into the seventeenth century or perhaps even later.¹⁸ For early modern England, the Islamic world remained important commercially, diplomatically, and militarily. It was in large measure through North African and Ottoman ports that the English accessed the world.

The encounter with Islam was paradigmatic for the effort to narrate forms of cross-cultural contact for reasons centered not only on contemporary history but also on the *longue durée* of literary history. The "Saracen," the "Moor," and the "Turk" had been the privileged others of European romance since the crusades. The terms of romance alterity migrated with the migrations of the English: the word "Moor" found its way to places as remote as Malabar and America, while the word "Turk" sprawled across the Islamic world from Morocco to India and beyond. At the same time, the expansion of English contacts with Turks, Arabs, and South Asians produced new confrontations between literary fantasy and contemporary experience. New forms of "commerce"—a word freighted with economic,

social, and sexual meanings, in the early modern lexicon—required a revision of romance that acknowledged new contacts and complicities.

The second pressure on early modern romance that gives it its distinctive history centers on the other pole of the cross-cultural relation, not the complexity of the figure of the Turk but the mirroring fractures of European, Christian, and English identity. Late medieval romance had already explored tensions between emergent forms of national identity and a vanishing ideal of "Christendom"—in practice restricted to the western European territories that acknowledged papal supremacy, increasingly forgetting the Christian populations of Africa and Asia and even eastern Europe.¹⁹ In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, forms of imperial rivalry and the experience of the post-Reformation religious wars produced a crisis in the idea of "Christendom" even in its limited, Latin embodiment, at the same time that economic expansion increased contacts and affiliations with the world beyond Christendom. The fissures of religious conflict threatened any sense of shared Christian identity. Martin Luther insisted that, despite all apparent outward differences, Turks, Jews, Catholics, and even radical Protestant sectarians were exactly the same: "there is all one and the same reason, the same heart, opinion, and cogitation in them all."²⁰ Over a century later, in the prefatory material to the first English translation of the Qur'an, Alexander Ross invited his readers to imagine the spectacle—realized, apparently, in Oliver Cromwell—of "Mahomet" speaking English.²¹ For both Luther and Ross, Christian confessional differences replicated the difference of believer from "infidel."

Early modern romance negotiates a moment of real crisis, a moment that demands a new imaginative globalism, and a moment that at the same time frustrates or complicates the narrative form through which medieval Christendom had sought to imagine its contacts with that wider world. A sense of the depths of this crisis is evoked by a book whose publication predates the temporal frame of my discussion, but whose subsequent history suggests the contradictions faced by romance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The book is Guillaume Caoursin's *Rhodie obsidionis descriptio*, translated into English by John Kaye in 1482 as *The Siege of Rhodes*.²² *The Siege* is a brief but compelling narrative whose power resides in the way Caoursin casts the island's resistance to Turkish invasion as a crusade romance with both divine and papal sanction. In his dedication to Edward IV, Kaye imagines this text as having a real devotional efficacy. The book has the power to strengthen the faith and belief of a Christian people against the seductions of renegadism: "they

redyng,” Kaye assures us, “shal haue Joye / & consolacyon & shal alwey deuoutely knowe by dayly miracles & goddes werkes the inestimable power & certente of our crysten fayth” (f. 1r–v). The book even has the power to *produce* this Christian people out of a diverse population composed of knights, citizens, and merchants, Latins, Greeks, and Jews. “Alle thees to geder,” we are told, “wyth one word / wyth one herte / and wyth one feyth / pourposed and swere to defende and kepe the cytee of Rhodes: or elles to dye gladdely and kyndely for hym that dyed for vs alle” (f. 15r–v).

The Jews of Rhodes presumably did not think they were fighting for “hym that dyed for vs alle.” The subsequent history of the book, moreover, reveals the contradictions faced by any embodied notion of a Christian people, in the sixteenth century. In the copy of *The Siege* in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, the book’s providential narrative is literally unreadable. At five points in the text, words have been erased from it so carefully that in two cases no trace remains on the page. Only through the context is it possible to reconstruct what was once there. But the context is quite clear. Four of the erased words are the word “pope”; the fifth is “pardones,” referring to the grant of crusade indulgences by Sixtus IV to all who helped defend Rhodes. The signs of papal involvement with this crusade have been systematically effaced by a Protestant reader determined to “reform” the book.²³ Caoursin’s romanticized version of contemporary history is unreadable at precisely those points at which it attempts to anchor its representation of a Christian people to a legitimating religious authority. *The Siege of Rhodes* thus physically manifests an early modern crisis of representation, even as it signals the continuing appeal of romance for post-Reformation England: the effort to expunge this book is, after all, an effort to rescue it for a Protestant reading.

In this moment of crisis, authors like Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton adapted, rewrote, or resisted romance, seeking in these acts of revision ways of exploring a new world of conflicting and uncertain identities. Commerce, piracy, renegadism, and forms of diplomatic and military collusion tied England to the Islamic world. At the same time, forms of conflict—between competing versions of what it meant to be English or Christian, and between nations competing for imperial and commercial dominance—initiated a struggle over romance representations of difference. Romance became a contested genre, a literary form deeply invested in the effort to reimagine the world in an era of religious war and commercial expansion. In this context, the figure of the “Turk” evokes the question of identity as an issue that must be confronted; the “Turk” of early modern romance is a mobile signifier

of difference, one that could be appropriated and re-appropriated in competing ways. The "Turk" emerges at the intersection of a series of discourses vital to the reimagining of identity in the early modern period, discourses of religion, race, politics, gender, sexuality, and economics.

Each chapter of this book traces the encounter with the Turk through a different set of texts, a different set of discourses, and a different historical moment. Each chapter also focuses on a different aspect of romance. The first chapter begins with a reading of Anthony Munday's prose romance *Zelauto*, which uses the fiction of a Persian setting to address at once forms of contact with Islam and forms of religious dissidence and state violence within England. The chapter then reads a similar doubling in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, arguing that Spenser refashions the romance Saracen according to a Reformation polemic about Islam and Catholicism as forms of false faith: Spenser appropriates medieval heroic poetry for a Protestant politics in order to explore the fissures of religious identity in the sixteenth century.

Medieval romance paired its war stories with stories of exogamous or miscegenated desire that fantasize an erotic and material absorption of the Saracen world. Chapter 2 traces Shakespeare's revisions of romance in *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and *The Tempest*, arguing that each play transforms the emotional and ideological resources of the genre. In *Merchant* and *Othello*, romance strains or breaks, in the effort to encompass England's new global affinities; in *The Tempest*, Shakespeare abandons romance exogamy with the abandonment of Claribel to an African marriage no one in the play celebrates, focusing our attention instead on Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda, a story of the policing of race and sexuality that expresses a very different conception of the world. *The Tempest* is suspended between two competing narratives of identity, one that uses erotic intimacy to evoke Christianity's global desires, and another in which sexuality becomes the anxious ground of increasingly racialized identities.

Chapter 3 argues that, for England in the early modern period, the Ottoman Empire embodied not a stagnant archaism—the stifling atmosphere of "oriental despotism" as theorized in the eighteenth century—but a form of political modernity: a sophisticated Ottoman administrative state guaranteed political loyalty while leaving open the question of the religious identities of its subjects. Ottoman politics thus embodied the possibility of a concept of "the political" separated from religion. The chapter turns to the work of Fulke Greville in order to trace the resistance this possibility could provoke, a resistance that Greville encodes as a theory of genre. The "Dedication to Sidney"—the

introduction to an unpublished collection of Greville's plays—interprets the incompleteness of Sidney's *Arcadia* as a symptom of the failure of a militant Protestant politics, and presents Greville's turn to tragedy as a response to the changed conditions of Jacobean England. Greville's *Mustapha*—one of two plays introduced by the "Dedication"—then figures England's abandonment of a Protestant foreign policy as an Islamicization of the English body politic. The turn from romance to tragedy encodes a response to what Greville sees as the impasses of a politics divorced from religion.

The fourth chapter focuses on Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*, in which romance is appropriated for a religious and political vision antithetical to Greville's. The play's fantasies of piracy and sexual slavery depict North Africa as a seductive border zone between Christianity and Islam, a space that enables various transgressive, cosmopolitan identities; in this, the play responds to anxieties about new forms of global commerce, drawing on romance to emplot its characters' arrival in and escape from Africa. But—unprecedentedly—the person who sets this plot in motion is a Jesuit. As Massinger emphasizes the difference of Turks from Christians, he downplays differences between Protestants and Catholics, writing his play into a Laudian discourse that insists on Christian unity by reinvigorating anti-Islamism, and that at the same time accuses radical Protestants of a secret affinity with Islam.

The last chapter reads a lingering attachment to chivalry in Milton's late poems, in which chivalric romance embodies a continued but troubled hope for a synthesis of religious zeal and political action. This synthesis receives its most intense scrutiny in *Samson Agonistes*, which has repeatedly been read as asserting a politics of divine violence: at least, Milton's enemies read him this way, as they elaborated a discourse of "enthusiasm" or—in modern terms—"terrorism," to diagnose the dangerous appeal of radical politics. This discourse condemned the revolutionaries by the example of Muhammad, conflating puritan holy war with Islamic *jihad*, and in the process decisively transforming both the representation of Islam and the cultural and political significances of romance. The chapter ends by suggesting that a new idea of European-ness was fostered by the repudiation of Islam and radical Protestantism, both now understood as embodying a seductive but irrational and "premodern" sensibility also given literary embodiment in the extravagant fantasies of chivalric romance.

Crusade, politics, sexuality, renegadism, commerce, terrorism: early modern romance opens up a wide range of discursive practices, including the political, the economic, the erotic, and the theological.

It also evokes a wide affective register, an unstable mix of wonder, longing, and fear, and an often unpredictable oscillation between violence and desire. This is an emotional register perhaps not unique to early modern romance, but which in early modern romance expresses a deep-seated conflict over forms of identity that were threatening to dissolve at every moment, both at home and abroad. The goal of this book is to evoke the ideological complexity of early modern romance, its various ways of narrating the encounter with the "Turk," and to show how that act of narration reveals both England and Europe as spaces of difference unified only by a real and conceptual violence. In recent criticism, romance has often been linked to the question of empire, either as the genre of imperial or colonial fantasy, or as embodying a digressive resistance to the telos of the conqueror's desire.²⁴ But the global conflicts and affinities narrated by romance exceed the reach of either of these claims. Romance opens up a global imaginary: it does not represent either a reserve of imperial fantasy or a critique of such fantasies but encodes a more complex history of global identities.

To think about romance in these terms suggests a new approach to early modern representations of Islam. I deliberately resist, here, the word "orientalism," because of the theoretical model that word brings with it. Edward Said has described the modern academic discipline of "Orientalism" as a discourse in which the west fantasizes the east for its own imperial purposes.²⁵ But legitimating imperialism is only one possible purpose of early modern romance, and it is a purpose repeatedly frustrated by narratives that complicate or call into question imperial desires and imperial identities. Early modern romance struggles to come to terms with a world of multiple allegiances and conflicting modes of identity, and gives form to that struggle in fictions of travel, of miscegenation, of long-maintained disguises and sudden recognitions, of the enchantments of the marvelous or the strange. To attend to genre in thinking about the experiences of this first phase of globalization is to explore the multiple, intersecting conflicts through which early modern identities were formed, and to recognize the power of literary forms in imagining, engaging, *forming* the world defined by those conflicts.

Said has repeatedly been critiqued for offering a monolithic model of empire: if Said's analysis revealed the "Orient" as a western fantasy, that analysis has in turn been accused of depending on a binary of colonizer and colonized that distorts the complexities of empire, obscuring the anxious intimacies of colonial history and the ambivalence of colonial texts.²⁶ This critique, often mounted by way of the work of

Homi Bhabha, has clear relevance for an early modern moment when forms of imperial competition and religious violence rendered difficult any coherent notion of “Christendom,” “Europe,” or “the West.”²⁷

But early modern criticism interested in the figure of the Turk has tended to approach its debt to Said—and to postcolonial theory generally—less by way of theoretical than of historical difference, arguing that the early modern period does not (yet) offer a scene of colonial confrontation: it is a moment “Before Orientalism” or “Before Empire,” and therefore a moment that demands a rethinking or even a refusal of postcolonial theory.²⁸ This argument has had widespread currency, but has loomed especially large in discussions of Anglo-Ottoman contacts. A kind of Ottoman exceptionalism has discovered in the Ottoman Empire an imperial non-Christian other facing a marginal England in what looks like a reversal of the colonial scenario.²⁹ While this work has been valuable in opening up our understanding of English contacts with Islam, there has been a trade-off in the firm line drawn here between early modern and postcolonial studies. The early modern period is “before” empire only from an English perspective, and arguably not even there, if we take into account English imperial fantasies and projects.³⁰ It is not even quite accurate to argue that empire was in no way a material reality for England: in the new trading companies, England already had what would become a vital element in the genesis of an imperial project modeled not after the Spanish example of conquest but after the Dutch example of monopolistic trade supported by a diffuse network of well-armed fortresses and ships.³¹ In the early seventeenth century, this was an emergent reality; but it was a possibility that was being both imagined and actively promoted by Richard Hakluyt and others.

The presence or absence of empire cannot be the sole condition of relevance of theories that are more concerned with the intellectual and cultural dispositions enabling empire, and with the multiple ways in which nations and communities have imagined and constituted themselves. A few of the arguments that question the relevance of postcolonial paradigms for the early modern moment have more radically attacked the very opposition of “east” and “west.” The supposed civilizational divide between Islam and Europe is demolished by a reading of Euro-Ottoman relations that emphasizes patterns of alliance and exchange, reimagining the divisions of the world not according to differences of religion or race but according to trade networks and the lines of commerce and communication.³² Claims first articulated by economic historians are generalized to all culture, as demonstrating—in the words of Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton—the existence of

"reciprocating . . . cultural exchanges" across "an undivided, seamless cultural sphere."³³ The question of "Europe" is thereby opened up in radical ways, in the effort to look for a moment not just before European hegemony but before Europe itself.

This work seems to me to pose a set of vital questions. What was "Europe," in the early modern period? What were the lines of felt affiliation, beyond the confines of the nation? Can we trace a history through which certain concepts—religion, race, culture, politics—compelled changing understandings of the forms of belonging, the cultural geography of difference, on a transnational scale? I am skeptical of the ways that Brotton and Jardine answer these questions. Their work is exemplary for its effort to imagine the world beyond the ideologically motivated categories of conventional historiography, but it exceeds its reach by insisting that those categories are purely the product of fevered modern imaginations. The critique of the boundaries drawn around Europe is carried so far that it obscures the history of early modern identities and provides no real way of thinking about the broad lines of affiliation and difference in the period. If a modern conception of "Europe" did not yet exist, then in what terms were transnational identities understood? To what degree did an older concept of "Christendom" still retain its power, despite the religious wars? To address these questions in the early modern period is to think about the history of transnational forms of identity at a moment on the threshold of modernity. To think in these terms may also encourage a revitalized conversation between early modern and postcolonial studies over the question of an emergent modernity—a subject that has been intensely discussed in more recent postcolonial work, and which has the potential to provide real points of contact with early modern studies.³⁴

Although my argument in this book is historical rather than theoretical, I do want to claim that the form that argument takes represents one version of what it can mean to "postcolonialize," as an early modernist.³⁵ My focus on genre seeks to open up the literary text to a history that encodes large-scale transformations in the ways identities were imagined in the early modern moment. Rather than emphasizing only the particularity of the early modern period, I want to suggest that the history I offer through the lens of romance comprises a crucial moment in the self-imagining of Europe *as* Europe, the beginnings of a new Europe that emerges out of the crisis of Christendom. The early modern period may not have possessed an ideologically stable conception of what it meant to be European, but it did witness the ideological emergence of "Europeanness" from a differently

constructed medieval world, in discourses of race, law, theology, and politics, and in the literary genre of romance.

Accounts of the origins of “European” identity typically begin by emphasizing a shared Christianity.³⁶ This logic needs to be turned on its head: “Europe” comes into being not in religious unity but in its demise, in the fracturing of the institutions of medieval Catholicism, in the failure of the one church and the one empire.³⁷ Whereas Christendom had dreamed itself as a potentially world-spanning unity, a reincarnated Roman Empire, Europe begins in religious conflict and in the competition of emergent nation-states.³⁸ Modern histories of “the idea of Europe” often virtually identify Europe with the states system, the balance of powers established in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the wake of the religious wars—that is, with the failure of unity and, in the experience of that failure, the search for new ways of managing conflict.³⁹ From the failure of Christendom emerges a Europe that is the space of a new international politics, the inaugural space of international law; but this space is also defined by a new, multilayered conception of Europeanness, an idea in part guaranteed through a radically simplified account of Christian truth—an explicit goal of some seventeenth-century theologians—but also and more significantly in newly elaborated discourses of race, politics, and culture.

We might see these discourses as secularized stand-ins for a lost religious unity; but they also generated very different narratives for how Europe relates to the rest of the world. Where Christendom dreamed of becoming coextensive with the world, of obliterating all difference, “Europe” emerges as a claim to difference, and thus remains predicated on a withdrawal from the world, a distance or reserve that cannot be overcome. Several of the chapters that follow will seek to show how various aspects of the discursive elaboration of this new Europe can be traced to the early modern crisis of romance. The history of early modern English romance finally looks beyond England, beyond any national sense of identity, toward the invention of a transnational European modernity, a replacement for an equally transnational medieval Christendom. This process can be glimpsed in *The Tempest*. The story of Claribel’s marriage to the king of Tunis—the event that brings Alonso and company across the Mediterranean—recalls the romance of exogamy, a late medieval literary form that, through a sexual fiction, figures the assimilation of the Saracen world and thus the global aspirations of Christendom. But in Shakespeare, that narrative is suppressed; it has lost its capacity to evoke a compelling vision of the world. The play’s concluding return to the safe

shores of Italy, bringing with it a Miranda rescued from Caliban's violent advances, works instead to produce the fantasy of a Europe imagined now in racial, sexual, and political terms. Whether or not we can read the play as a colonial fantasy—an issue that has exercised critics for years—we should read it as helping to construct a new romance of European separateness, a European identity whose first move is a retreat, a strategic withdrawal from the cosmopolitan and miscegenated spaces of a wider world.

This approach to the history of identities seems to me to offer a corrective to new historicism's retrenchment behind national boundaries. The field first known as "Renaissance studies" began in the effort to imagine an origin for a specifically European modernity: according to Jakob Burckhardt, the sixteenth-century Italian was "the firstborn among the sons of Europe," and the Italian Renaissance was "the leader of modern ages."⁴⁰ The field that developed from Burckhardt's work was a kind of comparative literature, a discipline that, despite having produced the concept of a "world literature," nevertheless in practice remained largely circumscribed by the study of European literatures.⁴¹ "Renaissance studies" played a significant part in creating this sense of a common Europeanness, defined first and foremost in terms of an emergent modernity. New historicism has discredited this conception of what it is to be "European," but in its place it has offered an account of early modern culture almost wholly limited to the nation. The transnational has essentially been abandoned, except in the largely separate bodies of work on issues of race and religion. We need to recover, from beyond the critique of "Renaissance studies," a sense of the period's role in producing new, transnational cultural formations, and this will require new ways of analyzing the claims of European modernity.

Such work might involve new comparatisms constructed along lines different from those produced by the old Renaissance studies; but even within the study of each national culture, it should mean a new attention to the changing ways in which transnational identities were imagined. It should also mean a more productive dialogue with postcolonial studies centered on the discursive history of modernity and its close relationship to the claims of Europe.⁴² The emergence of several of the discourses traced in the chapters that follow—race, "terrorism," international law, the autonomy of the political—marked radical reconfigurations of early modern identities whose effects are still with us. By pursuing such histories, early modern critics can contribute vitally to issues being debated beyond our field without either

sacrificing the specificity of the early modern moment or risking disciplinary insularity.

Romance represents a resonant site for exploring the global project of an emergent Europe first of all because it is itself such a transnational form. It is the cultural inheritance of no single nation, and although it has taken various forms in various cultures, these versions of the genre developed in full knowledge of each other. The content of romance also poses the question of global identities: it ranges widely through the world; it represents the encounter with often radical forms of difference; and it embodies a complex mixture of affective relations with foreignness: wonder, desire, fear, hatred. This instability, this mixture of strangely discordant emotions, is part of what makes romance affectively and ideologically productive. Early modern romance offers a generic matrix for exploring the complexities of a world of emergent empire, globalizing commerce, and religious violence, and for linking those world-historical pressures directly to a fragile, fractured, or vulnerable sense of self. The diffuse, wandering narratives of romance evoke the complexity and contradictoriness of the early modern moment, to which they can perhaps be read as a displaced, literary response.

My claims about romance represent an effort to bridge the gap between formalist and historicist methods of reading, by insisting not only that literary form is historical to its core but also that the literary text's deepest engagement with history lies in its adoption, adaptation, or repudiation of formal models. "Genre," writes Julia Lupton,

is a term absolutely crucial to the breaking down of both formalist and contextual hypostatizations, since genre, effecting a contract between the author and the audience in relation to a once and future tradition, situates the work in the matrix of conventions that make up not the context, outside, or prehistory of the work, but the very being of the work in time.⁴³

Lupton cites Fredric Jameson's discussion of "the mediatory function of the notion of a genre, which allows the coordination of immanent formal analysis of the individual text with the twin diachronic perspective of the history of forms and the evolution of social life."⁴⁴ This is a method of reading that has a long history in Marxist criticism, including Georg Lukács's work on the historical novel and Walter Benjamin's study of seventeenth-century German drama.⁴⁵ As Franco Moretti writes, "theories of form are usually blind to history, and historical work blind to form"; but the legacy of certain strands within twentieth-century Marxist criticism allows us to recognize "form as the most profoundly social aspect of literature." "Every formal feature

of poetry," as Susan Stewart writes, from a very different angle, is "a social-historical feature and at the same time makes possible links and adaptations between and across social and historical contexts": "Forms are a legacy from the dead and to the future."⁴⁶

Attending to a text's relationship to genre releases that text into a wider history, and thereby enables a longer perspective on historical transitions, what Lupton calls "the fallout of epochal change registered in generic transformations" (xxx). A genre, in this sense, is a flexible relation between authors and audiences, one subject to significant transformations over time; the work of much genre theory has therefore been to trace such transformations, and, in this, has been substantially invested in both history and the processes of generic hybridization, in literary forms that push the boundaries of a given genre. This perspective is compactly registered in Claudio Guillén's discussion of the "itinerary" of a genre.⁴⁷ My argument seeks to pursue such an itinerary, following the traces of romance as they appear even in texts that might seem to be remote from romance's affective and ideological commitments. I am interested in the ways in which early modern texts confront their own moment by encoding a relationship to romance, whether in Spenser's chivalric fictions or in Shakespeare's more allusive gestures to the genre. This generic process extends into texts that might not normally be thought of as "literary": a relationship to romance shapes Guillaume Caoursin's narrative of the Turkish assault on Rhodes, John Bale's reading of Revelation, and Fulke Greville's account of Jacobean politics. All of these texts use romance to explore a new world of global expansion and religious fragmentation, either projecting that world as romance or emphasizing the tensions between romance and contemporary history in order to focus on the meaning of that history, its relationship to cultural expectations and forms of identity.

In taking genre as a key term enabling a practice of reading that is at once formal and historical, this book participates in a recent return to the question of form, in early modern studies. This includes important recent work on romance itself, such as Joan Pong Linton's *The Romance of the New World*, which reads romances of "husbandry" in terms of England's emergent colonial investments, or Jonathan Gil Harris's *Sick Economies*, which links the genre to mercantilist theorizations of the global economy.⁴⁸ But the turn to form also includes the work of Roland Greene on Petrarchism and empire; that of Jean Howard on "London comedy" and the geography of the city; that of Zachary Lesser on the politics of tragicomedy and its relation to theories of mixed sovereignty; and that of Adam Zucker on comic

form and the social spaces of an emerging “Town” culture.⁴⁹ What this work shares is a conviction that form is an essential critical term precisely for historical readings of literature, and that the history of literary forms mediates between the individual text and the movements of social, political, and economic histories.

Attention to form does not distract from recognition of the historical productivity of a literary text but enables a more complex and wide-ranging sense of the text’s engagement with history: it enables the recognition of an ideology of form that is “reproduced, contested, or appropriated” in each text, and that enters into complex relations with other forms of cultural material and other cultural practices.⁵⁰ The literary text, in its very being in time, sediments the traces of ongoing and long-term struggles, the signs of change, adaptation, transformation.⁵¹ If early modern romance attempts to imagine a new world of imperial competition and global expansion, the form can also be said to encode within itself a long history, one that reaches back to the crusades and forward to the colonial world. This is a history that links discursive notions such as “Christendom,” “Islam,” and “Europe,” one that can help us understand not only modes of cultural transformation in the early modern period but also how those transformations form part of a history that reaches to our present moment.

I want to approach this point by way of a rereading of modern theories of romance aimed at suggesting how romance can become a productive site of dialogue over the question of modernity. There is a lingering sense in virtually all of its critics that romance is something belated, something atavistic or archaic. This is certainly true of the literature about the rise of the novel, where “romance” appears as the embodiment of everything—unrestrained fantasy, irrationalism, aristocratic codes of honor, a still-enchanted world—superseded by the novel, which Michael McKeon calls “the *modern* genre” and Lukács “the epic of a world that has been abandoned by God.”⁵² An insistence on the archaism of romance in fact pervades romance criticism from the beginning. In his *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, Richard Hurd describes the world from which romance emerges, arguing that we can account for romance by recalling its feudal origins. We seem to be on the verge of a historicist interpretation of romance, one that seeks to explain the genre by linking it to its social origins. But it turns out that the problem of romance cannot be solved by reference to feudalism: the problem is rather to explain the continuing hold of romance on a later imagination, to explain “the persistence of romance”—a phrase repeated verbatim, as if with surprise, by both McKeon and Jameson—into a post-feudal world.⁵³ “The spirit of

Chivalry," Hurd writes, "was a fire which soon spent itself: But that of *Romance*, which was kindled at it, burnt long, and continued its light and heat even to the politer ages" (3-4). Romance survives the social formations that produced it; it projects itself into the future even though the conditions of its formation lie in an unremembered past. As a result, when romance appears, it risks being "hooted at / Like an old tale."⁵⁴

In early modern England, romance was at once very old and very new. On the one hand, humanists and puritans identified these "ungratious bokes" with the tastes and ideologies of a bygone era, and condemned them as the entertainment of ignorant, superstitious, and violent people.⁵⁵ Roger Ascham famously linked romance to "our forefathers tyme, whan Papistrie, as a standyng poole, couered and ouerflowed all England."⁵⁶ In any number of seventeenth-century plays, romances are singled out as old-fashioned, or as the reading material of servants, citizens, and women.⁵⁷ On the other hand, romance provided the resources for generic innovation, whether in Spenser's romantic epic, in pastoral romances by Philip Sidney and Mary Wroth, in the fictions of Robert Greene and John Lyly, in late Shakespeare, in the new dramatic genre of tragicomedy, or in Milton's poetry.⁵⁸ For Italian critics, moreover, romance was a distinctively new literary form whose relationship to classical theory was intensely debated. According to some of the participants in this first battle of "ancients" and "moderns," romance was a form adapted to the culture of a new era and the tastes of new readerships, and one that therefore demanded a new theorization.⁵⁹ Even for Ascham, the problem was in some sense not romance's age but its novelty, its connection to a medieval era that severed humanists and Protestants alike from their desired pasts, whether in the classical world or in "primitive" Christianity. Early modern romance might thus be said to be seeking a version of "the modern." As Rita Copeland has argued, the word "romance" was in transition in the early modern period: "'romance' and 'romantic' as used in the seventeenth century and later imply a certain retrospective construction of the Middle Ages as archaic and exotic, but the Middle Ages used the term *romans* to characterize its own modernity."⁶⁰ From the product of a new, post-classical literary culture, romance was becoming the embodiment of a bygone world.

The secret truth about theories of romance is that they are always also covert theories of modernity. Alistair Fowler's work on genre might lead one to suspect that all theories of genre tend to become theories of modernity, insofar as they trace what seems for him always to be a history in which the obscure demands of convention are

opened up, relativized, rendered flexible, becoming themselves the objects of a kind of philosophical scrutiny. Nevertheless, theories of romance, in particular, seem almost compelled to address the question of the modern. Two classic accounts of twelfth-century romance, by W.P. Ker and R.W. Southern, articulate between them a kind of referendum on modernity. Southern associates romance with a new social and psychic mobility, a new sense of individual human capacity symbolized in the difference between the massed armies of the *Chanson de Roland* and the lone, wandering knights of Chrétien de Troyes; Ker identifies romance with “modern cosmopolitan civilization” and the emergence of literature as a sophisticated, professional discourse.⁶¹ While Southern celebrates the spirit of this modern age, Ker laments the passing of an older society. But for both, romance symbolizes a transformation of the world, even the advent of a radically new world.

The effort to theorize romance is intimately connected to the effort to theorize modernity; at the same time, theories of modernity often turn to romance to articulate their claims. When Foucault described the “classical episteme” of the seventeenth century, he did so in part by discovering in *Don Quixote*—“the first modern work of literature”—a mode of textuality and a relationship to language that are constitutive of “the new arrangement in which we are still caught.”⁶² In *Quixote*, Foucault found a pure, self-enclosed language, one that ruptures a sixteenth-century disposition he had already imagined as a kind of romance: “sixteenth-century knowledge condemned itself to never knowing anything but the same thing, and to knowing that thing only at the unattainable end of an endless journey” (30). Not only is romance premodern, but its narrative form also encodes a premodern epistemology.

But romance has also often been read in terms of a more complex relationship between the modern and the premodern, a haunting of modernity by the past. This paradoxical relation, at once rupture and continuity, shadows Foucault’s distinction between modern and premodern knowledge, which is predicated on an interesting misremembering of Cervantes:

All those . . . extravagant romances are, quite literally, unparalleled: no one in the world ever did resemble them; their timeless language remains suspended, unfulfilled by any similitude; they could all be burned in their entirety and the form of the world would not be changed. (46–47)

Foucault may be thinking here of part 1, chapter 6 of *Quixote*, when the priest holds his “great and pleasant Inquisition” over the contents

of Quixote's library. But in that chapter, only Quixote's niece and housekeeper seek a universal conflagration, what the narrator calls "the massacre of those innocents."⁶³ The priest, on the other hand, demands that they first take stock of what is there, a demand that leads to an extended debate about the merits of various texts. The library is not consigned to the flames: some books are burned, some are saved, some are reserved for further consideration, and some are to be edited. The scene does not condemn romance but reforms it. Foucault imagines a more absolute rupture than *Don Quixote* does.

This sense of a paradoxical continuity pervades much romance criticism. Romance is the ground on which Northrop Frye sought to demonstrate the legitimacy of the modern age by disclosing its connection with a mythic past: for Frye, romance is a "secular scripture," a displaced theology, and therefore also a link between modern forms of cultural expression and a premodern world. Romance names the mode of transformation of the premodern into the modern, myth into literature, and to study it is to study both the trace of the past that persists into modernity and the process of translation of the premodern into the modern. For Frye, literature is produced through a continuous process of displacement that is in effect a process of secularization; but that process itself guarantees that displaced mythologies remain the "grammar" of all literary production, connecting even the most ironic, alienated text to a sacred point of origin. This is a conception in some ways still mirrored in Fredric Jameson's rereading of Frye: "a history of romance as a genre becomes possible," Jameson writes, "when we explore the substitute codes and raw materials, which, in the increasingly secularized and rationalized world that emerges from the collapse of feudalism, are pressed into service to replace the older magical categories of Otherness which have now become so many dead languages" (131). The vocabulary of Jameson's theory of history derives in significant measure from the concept of secularization: "The history of forms . . . reflects this process, by which the visual features of ritual, or those practices of imagery still functional in religious ceremonies, are secularized and reorganized into ends in themselves" (63). A figural decoding of religion thus becomes one basis for Jameson's claims about the "political unconscious" of literature as "a symbolic meditation on the destiny of community," even as the four-fold medieval exegesis of scripture becomes the model for his own interpretive practice, with its ready embrace of acts of allegorical decoding (70).

If in Ker and Southern romance is the ground of a debate over the value of modernity, in subsequent theories it becomes part of the

effort to theorize the emergence of an “increasingly secularized and rationalized world” in which traces of a premodern past nevertheless persist. Even in Michael McKeon’s account of the origins of the novel, romance is more than a stand-in for the premodern: McKeon argues that romance should be understood as a retrospective invention which achieves its truth precisely “‘as a category of the most modern society.’”⁶⁴ “Romance” becomes intelligible only on the cusp of modernity; “medieval romance” becomes “medieval romance” in the early modern period, when—paradoxically, belatedly—it exercised its greatest influence.⁶⁵

One of the most sophisticated analyses to focus specifically on early modern romance—that of Patricia Parker—similarly discloses a paradoxical relationship between modernity and the premodern. Parker imagines romance as seeking a deferral of teleological narratives of crusade and apocalypse. As I will argue in chapter 1, she senses a messianic violence in romance, but responds to that violence by arguing that romance seeks to postpone the apocalyptic moment, seeks an infinite dilation of the meantime, the *saeculum*. In classical Latin, that word meant a “generation” or an “age”; in medieval Latin, it became “the world,” the in-between in which we await the fulfillment of time.⁶⁶ When Parker reads romance as dilatory, as errant, she reads it as secularizing, as opening up the space of the *saeculum* in order to preserve the legitimacy of the world against final destruction. Parker wants to discover in romance the origins of a modernity that is humane, skeptical, rational, and critical; but what her narrative suggests is an early modernity caught between forms of sacred violence and the desire to escape that violence.

In Frye, Jameson, McKeon, and Parker, romance unfolds a process of secularization or displacement that defines the relations between modernity and the premodern in terms of both difference and proximity—or, rather, defines the modern as concealing within it a secret continuing relationship to the premodern, even as it displaces that premodernity. In this, debates about romance shadow the debate over modernity carried out within discussions of secularization, which, in the words of Jean-Claude Monot, is divided between those who read secularization as “the *retreat* of religion” and therefore argue that “the present epoch opens a new perspective without precedent,” and those who read secularization as “essentially a transfer having consisted of schemes and models elaborated in the field of religion,” and therefore argue that “religion continues to nourish modernity without its knowledge.”⁶⁷ One might suspect that, for critics of romance, the genre has also become the means for a

working-through of twentieth-century histories and experiences. Without denying that possibility—and the corresponding possibility of historicizing these theories of romance—I want to suggest that this sense of the genre has something important to offer for a reading of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century romance. All of these theorists conscript romance to produce a certain version of the modern, in part by distinguishing it from some version of the premodern. In so doing, they position romance at the cusp of modernity: engaged in imagining, even producing a modern world, it nevertheless also remains marked by a premodernity from which it cannot separate itself.

Romance both produces the new and becomes the trace or remainder of a world left behind. In this, the genre offers ways of thinking about the belated and contentious arrival of the ideology of a specifically European modernity. Perhaps above all, it offers a glimpse of the conflicted process through which the idea of Europe and the idea of modernity emerged, in tandem, in response to specific historical pressures. I want to suggest that this is a productive matrix for reading early modern romance, that signal product of the "refeudalization" of the early modern imagination, and that it helps us see beyond critical paradigms that cordon off the period from a subsequent history—even though the rise of "early modern" as opposed to "Renaissance" studies was intended to do exactly the opposite. Early modern romance is engaged in imagining a new world by transforming the literary inheritance of the past. If the genre opens up the whole range of conflicted readings of modernity—defenses and denunciations, claims for a modernity conceived as an absolute rupture and readings of it as concealing a continuing relationship to the premodern—this is because it stands on a threshold. The question of romance unfolds a wider reading of the relations between history and identity, between the medieval and the modern, the sacred and the secular, Christendom and Europe.⁶⁸

Early modern romance rethinks forms of identity and belonging in the crisis of Christendom. It is here, I want to suggest in closing, that a rereading of Said's *Orientalism* against the grain can offer a different kind of payoff, for a historical understanding of romance. If *Orientalism* is finally limited as an account of modern imperialism, it is strangely resonant as a theory of romance. Here is Said writing about two nineteenth-century Orientalists:

For Michelet and Quinet there is no doubt that they belong to the communal European Romantic undertaking "either in epic or some other

major genre—in drama, in prose romance, or in the visionary ‘greater Ode’—radically to recast into terms appropriate to the historical and intellectual circumstances of their own age, the Christian pattern of the fall, the redemption, and the emergence of a new earth which will constitute a restored paradise.” (138)

Said is quoting from M.H. Abrams’s theory of Romanticism as a secularized Christianity, a “natural supernaturalism.”⁶⁹ The quotation is not simply part of a local argument about nineteenth-century orientalisms: it is an essential part of the fabric of Said’s analysis through a key chapter of his book. Orientalism, Said writes, is “a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redispensed, and reformed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism.”⁷⁰ It is a “secular post-Enlightenment myth whose outlines are unmistakably Christian,” a “reconstituted theology” (114–15).

This is more than a theory of Romanticism: it is both a theory of “romance” and a theory of modernity. Said is indebted to romance when he describes the “sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, intense energy” of “orientalist” fantasy, or when he describes the contents of that fantasy as “monsters, devils, heroes; terrors, pleasures, desires” (118, 63). “Orientalism” is “a set of representative figures, or tropes” and it is to be analyzed generically: “fictions have their own logic and their own dialectic of growth and decline” (71, 62). Said’s vocabulary evokes an affective register wider than his theory acknowledges: we are in the presence, here, of something in excess of the legitimation of empire that is the bottom line of his argument. We are in the presence, that is, of a mixture of desire, hatred, fear, and fulfillment that I would characterize as defining the imaginative world of romance.⁷¹

If Said’s account of empire seems too absolute in its handling of the ontological claims of “east” and “west,” his account of imperial modernity as a secularized theology recognizes a more complex relationship between past and present, in which the present both abolishes the past and continues to be secretly shaped by it. Reading Said’s work against the grain, we can arrive at a framework more useful for interpreting the early modern period and its relationship to a modern dispensation only beginning to emerge in the seventeenth century. We can also begin to see romance as a narrative form vital to the complex processes of translation, adaptation, and revision that mark the long transition between the medieval and the modern.

Romance participates in the formation of an emergent modernity by participating in the effort to reimagine global identities—redispersing, re-forming, perhaps even secularizing them. Said's work evokes the longer historical transition I seek to describe: the emergence, from the fractured religious unity of Christendom, of a secular and modern conception of "Europe." This emergence takes place in part through a rewriting of romance, and in reaction to a century marked by religious violence and by new global contacts and affiliations. Europe both displaces and takes the place of a lost Christendom. It does not simply emerge in opposition to Christendom but fills its place, theorizing and disciplining the forms of religious violence into sanctioned modes of imperial aggression and competition.⁷² Said's theory thus suggests the continuities between a modern history of empire and an early modern history of religious war and economic globalization. Early modern romance is a resonant place to look for signs of a cultural struggle that attended the first phase of global expansion not only because it evokes the wonder and desire often associated with imperial possession, but also and perhaps more significantly because it enables a rethinking of the relationship of past and present and a reimagining of the forms of identity that contributed to the construction of a new world.

I say "a new *world*" advisedly: this genre, the transnational literary inheritance of the late Middle Ages, does not remain circumscribed within a national history. The transnationality of romance transcends the question of the transmission of stories beyond national borders, to encompass also the question of how transnational space is imagined: however much romance occupies itself with the business of the nation, it is also engaged in imagining a world beyond the nation. Although I will tell my story from the perspective of England and English literature, it is finally a story about the formation and transformation of cultural spaces that seek to transcend any single state, cultural spaces that aspire to their own universality. Christendom was one such space, and modern Europe another. If we are to understand the culture of the early modern period and its place in a longer history, we must read both within and beyond national borders, without taking for granted the ontological stability of either the nation or the cultural landscape beyond the nation. This might involve new forms of comparative study, but might also involve work that, even if it stays within a given national culture, orients itself toward larger, transnational identities and issues. In that transnational frame, the romance figure of the Turk occupies a central place: the defining other of medieval Christendom, the Turk also presides over the consolidation

of a new sense of Europeaness. Because of this layered history, the romance Turk is a crucial figure for thinking about some of the widest boundaries of identity and some of the most long-term transformations in how identities were imagined and narrated. From the romance figure of the Turk, we arrive at the question of Europe: this is the trajectory I will follow in this book.

CHAPTER 1



“SECRET FAITH”

This chapter will trace a crisis of representation in early modern romance, produced by the effort to negotiate the complex religious politics of the sixteenth century. My key text will be Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, but I will begin by reading a text that is more obscure, but that suggests in a more compressed way the fractured politics of early modern romance.

In the second part of Anthony Munday’s *Zelauto*, the Italian prince from whom the text takes its name describes his journey from England to “*Zebaia*, a gallant and braue Cittie in *Persia*.” At first, Zelauto feels profoundly out of place in Persia: “Beeing come thither,” he tells his interlocutor Astræpho, “alas I wüst not what to say, the people so gased vpon me, as though they would haue eaten me.”¹ In Persia, he is a stranger and the object of a devouring gaze. But stepping off of the street, Zelauto finds himself in a more familiar world, an inn managed by a Persian man and his Florentine wife where he is welcomed with the same hospitality he has encountered in Italy, Spain, and England. This text, so concerned with the ethical obligations governing the encounter with a stranger, extends the reach of that ethics from the Mediterranean to England and the Middle East. “Surely it seemeth very straunge vnto me, that on a straunger you should bestowe such courtesie,” Zelauto tells an innkeeper in Naples, but the point is surely that the stranger is the proper object of such courtesy (C3r).

But Persia turns out to be a place that violates any such sense of obligation to the stranger. In the inn, Zelauto is told about a Persian law according to which all Christians may remain in the city for ten days, at which point they must either convert or be killed. Despite this

law, there are Christians living in Zebaia, but they practice their religion in secret, constantly under the threat of discovery. Even the family of the sultan lives in danger of this law: Zelauto meets one of the sultan's nephews, Mica Sheffola, whose sister is to be executed the next day, unless someone can be found who will fight the sultan's son Terolfo on her behalf. Mica expects no such help: no one will take up the challenge because "they doubt to be suspected thereby" (J4r). But Zelauto does take up the challenge, and defeats Terolfo.

This story casts into the form of a chivalric fiction an anxiety about the effects of Islamic power and Islamic law on Christian subjects and Christian travelers: romance figurations of difference open onto a contemporary history of cross-cultural contact that by 1580 included sites from Persia to Turkey and North Africa. But the story also engages a multivalent awareness of religious difference in the early modern period, and thereby provides the starting point for a reading of romance sensitive to the ways in which the genre emplots a relationship between multiple forms of difference. I will argue that Munday's *Zelauto* and Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, as they represent the encounter with Islam, also speak about differences fracturing the Christian world, testifying to a crisis of identity gripping the very possibility of a "Christian world." In this crisis, romance—a genre intimately associated with the boundaries of Christendom and with the encounter with a world beyond Christendom—strains to take into account new divisions and new forms of difference. Romance narrates religious identities in a state of war: like certain English scriptural exegetes, it is willing to take Paul at his word when he commands the faithful to "put on the whole armor of God."² But in early modern romance, this thinking of conflict is itself conflicted, divided in its efforts to represent at once the difference of Christian from Muslim and differences within Christianity itself.

I have said that *Zelauto* evokes a knowledge of cross-cultural encounter with Islam. Nowhere was any such law as the law of Zebaia observed, of course; but early modern sermons and pamphlets worried about the effects of life under Islamic rule and fulminated powerfully against the supposed oppression of Christian populations under Islam. Thus Hugh Goughe, the translator of Bartolomej Georgijevic's story of his thirteen years of captivity among the Turks, writes of the "horrible rackinge, painefull tormenting, and vnnaturall abusing, of our faithfull brethren the innocent Christians."³ A few years later, a book advertising itself as a description of the "Estate of Christians, liuing in subiection vnder the Turke" warns of the numbers who have converted to Islam, "being partly mis-lead by the vanities of Turkish

pompe and pride enticing them, and partly oppressed with pouertie and miserie."⁴

The issue that most exercised English readers was captivity: Georgijevic's text—which is something like a brief ethnography, history, and glossary of the Ottoman Empire—begins by describing how,

(being spoiled of all my goodes, bound with cheines, ledde to be solde as a beast, throughe townes, villages, stretes, and the most daungerous and slippery places of Thrace and the lesser Asia), seuen times I haue ben solde vnto most peineful and manifolde kindes of husbandry. (A5v)

Stories like this circulated constantly in early modern England, in print and orally. Roslyn Knutson has demonstrated, from the records of two London parishes, that collections were regularly taken for the redemption of such captives, a process that in effect guaranteed the publication, within the parishes, of stories of captivity. Thus, in May of 1588, the clerk of St. Botolph Aldgate recorded a collection taken for Thomas Morgan, who "had served her majestie in her Warres in Dyveres places," but then, fighting in Hungary, "by Infedylees . . . was Taken prisoner and above xv yearees kept bond and thrall in most cruell slaverie and Bondage."⁵

As Munday wrote, this was more than a question of distant sympathies. English soldiers were fighting Turkish armies in eastern Europe, even as English merchants were pursuing new forms of commerce from Persia to Morocco. In the year that Munday's romance was published, William Harborne was negotiating the first Anglo-Ottoman commercial treaty in Istanbul, a treaty that would lead to the establishment of the Levant Company and to a new English presence in cities like Istanbul, Izmir, Aleppo, Cairo, Iskendrun, and elsewhere. In June of 1577, Edmund Hogan had an audience with the sultan of Morocco, Mulay 'Abd al-Malik, at which the English were granted trading privileges in the sultan's realm. In 1580, perhaps the most crucial site was Persia: since the 1550s, the merchants of the Muscovy Company had been seeking to regularize an overland trade route through Russia to Persia, bypassing the rest of Europe as well as the Ottoman Empire. Until the development of the Levant trades in the later sixteenth century, the Muscovy Company's enterprises remained the most lucrative and spectacular of England's global commercial ventures. The anxiety about Christians living under Islam, in other words, was at once real and disingenuous: real, insofar as not only indigenous Christian populations but also English merchants were living under Islamic authorities across a range of Mediterranean and

Asian sites; but disingenuous in the way these expressions of anxiety seem to disavow England's economic and diplomatic intimacy with places like Persia, Morocco, and the Ottoman Empire.⁶

Munday's narrative asks to be read in terms of these new cross-cultural contacts. Despite the apparently aristocratic basis of its fiction, the world it evokes looks very much like the increasingly global world of early modern capital: it is a world of inns and travelers, a world in which an Italian might travel to England with a group of merchants he has met in Spain, or in which a Florentine might find herself managing an inn in Persia. And yet, at the same time, the woodcut that accompanies the story of Mica and his sister hints at another context for reading this story. When Zelauto challenges the sultan's champion, Mica's sister is "bound to a stake," ready for her execution (L1r). The woodcut of this scene shows us, in the background, Zelauto jousting with Terolfo, and in the foreground, the sultan watching as bundles of wood are piled around a woman tied to a stake. Mica's sister, in other words, is going to be burned.⁷

In some measure, the image of the sacrifice of a Christian believer under the gaze of a watching sultan reproduces a scene already iconically inscribed within Christian narratives. Albrecht Dürer's depiction of the martyrdom of Saint John, for example, represents John's Roman persecutor as a sultan, as Thomas Mann's Adrian Leverkühn remembered centuries later: "It is the Emperor Nero, you must know, a magnificent big Turk with Italian brocade on his back."⁸ Early modern images of the passion routinely orientalize the figures of Christ's persecutors, and even insert strangely out-of-place Turkish figures into the narrative. Titian's *Ecce Homo* of 1543 places a recognizable portrait of the Ottoman sultan Suleiman in visual opposition to the figure of Christ: as Christ stands near the top left of the painting, Suleiman watches from the right, his head tilted back, looking upward with an impassive or contemptuous expression on his face. He seems either to assent to Christ's death or else to betray the most distant relationship to the scene unfolding before him. Suleiman's presence in this scene enacts a double transaction between Christianity's foundational narrative and sixteenth-century experiences of religious difference. On the one hand, the figure of the "Turk" makes visible the difference between those who persecuted Christ and those who were faithful to him, a difference that in the moment of the *Ecce homo* corresponds to no forms of racial, cultural, or even religious difference. On the other hand, the opposition between the faithful and the infidel manifested in the passion narrative offers the typological model for all future religious differences including the difference between Christian

and Muslim, through the intermediary figure of supposed Jewish recalcitrance. History and scripture interpret each other: the encounter with the Turks provides a visual language for the antagonisms of scriptural narrative, while that narrative supplies contemporary experiences of encounter with a typological meaning.

The image of the sultan of Persia watching the execution of Mica's sister recalls the watching Suleiman of Titian's painting. But for all of the emphasis on Muslim cruelty in early modern texts, and for all of their reiterated descriptions of Muslim forms of punishment, burning at the stake—the method of execution depicted in *Zelauto*—remains a fundamentally European activity. In the early seventeenth century, Samuel Purchas listed the "publike punishments" of the Turks as "impaling on stakes," "ganching on hookes," and a strange procedure apparently involving being severed at the waist and cauterized on a hot copper plate. Burning, however, is not mentioned.⁹ It was a form of execution reserved for the punishment of heretics in the Christian world; as such, in Elizabethan England, it was a violence most immediately associated with the execution of Protestant martyrs in the reign of Queen Mary. The woodcut in *Zelauto* recalls the violence depicted over and over in John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, with its obsessive documentation of the horrors of such deaths. If Munday's narrative suggests anxiety about Christians living in the Islamic world, the woodcut at the same time recalls forms of state-sponsored religious violence much closer to home.

By 1580, Queen Mary did not have a monopoly on religious violence. The Elizabethan regime was sponsoring a brutal war against the Irish Catholic rebels in Munster; in November 1580, the garrison of Smerwick in County Kerry surrendered to an English army led by Lord Grey de Wilton and was massacred. Munday may have written an account of this event, under the initials "A.M."¹⁰ At the same time, Elizabeth's regime was also beginning to engage in the policing of religious dissidents in England, both Catholics and radical Protestants, although in the 1570s and 1580s it was the Catholics who seemed to pose the most immediate threat. English refugees had established Catholic seminaries on the continent, continental presses were publishing books for recusant readers, and priests and Jesuits were infiltrating England.¹¹ In 1577, the government executed Cuthbert Mayne, a Douai priest, and in 1578 John Nelson, another priest. These men were hanged, not burned: they died as traitors rather than heretics. Nevertheless, their deaths mark the beginnings of a new persecution of Catholics in which by 1592 over one hundred and thirty priests and laypeople were killed.¹² Munday was intimately, if obscurely, involved

in this history. In the spring of 1579, he was living at the English College in Rome. The motive for his trip remains unclear: Munday claimed that he went only to see Europe; it has been argued that he went rather as a devoted Catholic or a convert; but by the early 1580s, he was working as a “pursuivant,” bringing recusants—and puritans—to Richard Topcliffe, for questioning, torture, and punishment.¹³ The forms of secrecy demanded by a culture of surveillance perhaps guarantee that Munday’s religious sympathies will remain forever undecidable, but he clearly had direct and personal experience of the politics of religious dissent in Elizabethan England.

The woodcut in *Zelauto* hints at a double reading, one attentive at once to the fractures of religious difference in the Islamic world and in England. The first part of the romance includes a lengthy encomium on Elizabeth, in the description of a pageant dramatizing the civilizing power of her virtue. But the second part of *Zelauto* suggests that England is not simply the site of civility but also of religious violence and the rigor of a harsh law. The romance’s emphasis on secrecy and on the strains imposed on courtesy and communication by this regime of surveillance underscores its connection to the politics of secrecy developing around religious dissidents in the second and third decades of Elizabeth’s reign. When *Zelauto* arrives at the inn in Persia, his host confides in him that he has for some time considered converting to Christianity, but has—despite his Christian wife—lacked a full understanding of Christian doctrine. *Zelauto* offers a quick lesson in theology and, equally quickly, the host accepts it; but then *Zelauto* derails the conversation: “So holde I it best, that at this tyme we leaue to conferre of these matters, least that when we least of all thinke, the enimie come to subuert vs” (J2r). Later, they converse more fully, behind closed doors. Speech is dangerous, when a misplaced comment can lead to the stake, and when “the enimie”—grammatically singular and yet conceptually pluralized by Munday’s text—may always be listening.

The host learns this inadequately, or too late: while *Zelauto* is in prison for having defeated Terolfo, the host is jailed, “for the woordes hee vsed in my cause, & other suspicious talke,” as *Zelauto* puts it (M2r). The network of secret Christians rescues *Zelauto* and helps him escape toward Istanbul, but the host is not so lucky, and *Zelauto* and Mica watch through a prison window as he is executed, “verie cruellie and tyrannicallie” (M2v). The story ends with the reminder of a very real threat of violence, attached at once to Islamic, Catholic, and Protestant state religions. The story that begins by establishing an ethics of obligation to the stranger ends demonstrating

the strains imposed on such an ethics by the politics of secrecy and surveillance.

Munday's chivalric fiction encodes a layered engagement with sixteenth-century religious politics, one that takes account of both Persia and England, both the zone of contact with Islam and the internal fractures of the Christian world. The double reading evoked by *Zelauto* allows the reader to recognize something "Persian" in the operation of religious violence in England. I want to suggest that this double reading offers a strategy for reading early modern romance more generally, and that early modern romance offers a paradigm for thinking about a crisis of identity and narrative in the early modern period. The crucial figure in this history is Edmund Spenser. In *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser addresses the problem of religious difference in a way that takes in both the encounter with Islam and the internal instability of Christendom, by appropriating and transforming the romance "Saracen."

The Islamic figures in *Zelauto* are called Persians, not Saracens; but while I do not want to discount the possibility of discursive regimes specific to Saracens, Turks, and Persians, in the English imagination, I do want to emphasize that all of these terms of difference emerge out of a structuring representation most powerfully associated with the "Saracen" of medieval romance. Originally the Roman name for the nomads of Syria and Arabia, and a word itself of uncertain origin, over the course of the Middle Ages "Saracen" became a mobile and resonant term of difference. As I argued in the introduction, while "Saracen" could mean "Arab," the word also functioned as a broad designator for the whole Muslim world—like its cousin, "Turk," which would largely come to replace it in the early modern period. From Jerome on, the word "Saracen" was understood as a spurious claim to descent from Sara by a people properly identified as "Agarens," the children of Hagar: at stake in the word "Saracen" are competing claims to a special relationship with the divine, claims that were put to judgment in romance.¹⁴

In the French *chansons de geste* and the Middle English romances deriving from them, the Saracens are associated with a series of deviations: pride, blasphemy, monstrousness, cannibalism. Perhaps their most recognizable trait is their idolatry. The romance Saracens pray to a pantheon of gods that includes most notoriously "Mahound," "Termagant," and "Apollin," a kind of blasphemous parody of the Christian trinity, of which the first member is clearly a French corruption of Muhammad's name, the last apparently a classical divinity, and the middle one of uncertain origin.¹⁵ One Middle English romance

opens with a sultan's vow "To Mahounde and to Appolyne" that he will burn Rome; but when his son and daughter conspire against him with the Christians, the sultan is quick to turn against his gods: "Ye fals goddis," he calls them, and angrily strikes Mahound, "that was of goolde fulle rede."¹⁶ The same invocation and abjuration of the same idols appears in the biblical mystery plays, through an anachronism parallel to the one that places Suleiman in the story of Christ's passion: in those plays, figures such as Herod, Pontius Pilate, and Pharaoh repeatedly reveal their "Saracen" origins by their choice of oaths.¹⁷ As in Titian's *Ecce homo*, the representation of scriptural narratives Islamicizes the figure of the persecuting unbeliever.

The "Saracen," in other words, is a multivalent figure produced at the intersection of history and theology, and as such represents both a typology of violent unbelief and a series of real, historical non-Christian identities: the Turk, the Persian, the Muslim. In Spenser criticism, this multivalence has tended to mean that critics have failed to link Spenser's Saracens with any actual historical encounter with Islam. But at one point in *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser quite clearly signals the historical parameters of his representation. The word "Turk" appears only once in the poem, near the end of Book I, in the description of the seven corporal works of mercy: the fourth such work is

Poore prisoners to relieue with gracious ayd,
And captiues to redeeme with price of bras,
From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd.¹⁸

The description couples together the romance "Saracen" and the contemporary Turks, evoking narratives of captivity in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa, but also linking those narratives to the genre of romance. We are more clearly in the presence of a contemporary history of contact with Islam here than in Munday's narrative, a history that explicitly includes the collecting of alms for the redemption of captives, as documented by Knutson.

But this contemporary history sits awkwardly within the theological framework of Spenser's allegory. The prisoners, we are told, are to be redeemed, "though they faultie were," because "God to vs forgiueth euery howre / Much more then that, why they in bands were layd." Spenser signals some discomfort with this redemptive work on behalf of prisoners who are "faultie," who may in some measure be responsible for their own captivity—like Redcross, captive to Orgoglio in canto seven. If captivity is the outward sign of an inward error, then what is the status of human efforts to intervene in the divine circuit of crime and punishment through the necessarily compromised medium of the "price of bras"? It is, after all, one thing for God to forgive, and

another for humans to seek to mitigate a divine punishment. Spenser attempts to resolve this contradiction by suggesting a typological relationship between the redemption of prisoners and Christ's harrowing of hell, but this only focuses the problem more intensely, calling attention to the incommensurability of human works of redemption and divine mercy: we cannot, in this sense, *redeem* prisoners at all, but can only mimic, imperfectly, perhaps erroneously, a redemption that is beyond our power and understanding.

Spenser's effort to think the border zone between Christianity and Islam is here rendered problematic by his sustained effort throughout this book to think a boundary internal to England, the boundary between Protestant and Catholic forms of Christianity: it is the doctrine that *faith alone saves* that here produces an anxiety or doubt about what it means to "redeem" captives.¹⁹ This double consciousness is itself the sign of an effort to rethink the figure of the Saracen, to pluralize or complicate the romance representation of difference for an early modern moment. Although the phrase "Turkes and Sarazins" marks the only intrusion of the Turks into Spenser's poem, it links those Turks to the romance Saracen, a figure of the enemy who pervades late medieval and early modern romance, and who occupies a neglected but crucial place in *The Faerie Queene*. By the end of Book I, we have already encountered a series of such Saracens. This Saracen presence in Faeryland, as I hope to show, signals Spenser's sustained engagement with the religious politics of romance.

Near the end of Book I, as the Redcross Knight prepares for the final assault on the dragon, Spenser glances forward to a future battle in which his Faery Queen will face a pagan king in a kind of misplaced crusade:

Faire Goddess lay that furious fit aside,
Till I of warres and bloody Mars do sing,
And Briton fields with Sarazin blood bedyde,
Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim king. (1.11.7)

When was British soil stained with Saracen blood? Medieval Arthurian texts—Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Malory's "Tale of King Arthur," for example—do imagine such a war.²⁰ But in 1590 or 1596, and in terms of Spenser's larger narrative, the possibility of war between a "faery Queene" and "Paynim king" evokes not only Arthurian romance but also a contemporary history of war with Spain. In the eighth canto of Book V, Spenser offers what looks like the fulfillment of this promise: there, Arthur and Arthegall

defend Queen Mercilla against “the Souldan,” that is, a sultan, a “Paynim king,” the archaic spelling of whose title links him to both the Islamic world and the representation of that world in romance. The episode is almost universally understood to figure the invasion of England by the Spanish Armada in 1588: Book V here continues the project suggested in Book I, reading contemporary English history through the lens of crusade romance. But why this delay, in completing a story promised four books previously, then seemingly abandoned without a trace? And why is the knight who at the end of Book I sets out to fight this sultan not present when the fight takes place? If a narrative pattern drawn from crusade romance underlies *The Faerie Queene*, it does so in an incomplete, distorted, or fractured way.

This incompleteness is a symptom of Spenser’s effort to rethink religious identities in the early modern moment. In writing Philip II as a sultan, Spenser transforms Spain from a national to a religious enemy, the “proper” object of a holy violence. Modern critics have been reluctant to see this violence, treating romance’s relationship to crusade as an empty convention, or even as an absence: crusade, Graham Hough writes, “has disappeared from *The Faerie Queene*.”²¹ One of the most compelling discussions of early modern romance—Patricia Parker’s account of the genre as based on a seemingly endless narrative dilation—reads romance as a whole as seeking a suspension of narrative teleology, of what she calls “final solutions.” This deferral opens up a new space, poised between the twin dangers of an endless wandering and too quick a path to the end.²² Romance seeks a suspension of closure, and closure becomes in Parker’s account a prefiguration of apocalypse, with all the violence that suggestion implies. “If apocalypse is destruction,” she writes, “the only hope for the artist lies in dilating the liminal space” (226).

As Parker makes clear, the moment of apocalypse is also a moment of holy war: it is a polarizing moment, when there is no more room for neutral angels (98). But what Parker does not say is that all of the texts she discusses—including, perhaps surprisingly, *Paradise Lost*—contain figures who are the “proper” objects of crusading violence, Turks or Saracens who die deaths we are not allowed to call tragic. This is not, in other words, simply a free-floating epistemological violence: it is a story with real purchase on the world. What Parker at once evokes and conceals is the connection of romance to crusading violence. The merit of her account is that it enables a leap from content to form: the point is not simply that crusade is part of the narrative inheritance of romance, but that a crusading ethos has shaped the genre from within, through its relationship to a violence it both suspends and solicits.

Parker's account is a humane effort to describe and to *stay with* a moment of narrative suspension that is also the space for doubt, for a lingering uncertainty about "final solutions." That phrase, with its evocation of a genuinely genocidal project, also marks the limits of her reading: in romance, deferred endings nevertheless do come, and violently, as in Ariosto, who ends his poem with the plunge of a dagger, and a soul that flies cursing to hell, "to disavow / The right which all his life he had defied / With insolence and arrogance and pride."²³ Or else, as in Spenser, the end does not come, but the poem longs for it: "graunt me that Sabaoths sight," a phrase that, even in its spelling, hints at the violence of endings by conflating the God of the Sabbath with the Lord of Hosts (7.8.2). Parker's desire for openness leads her to think that apocalyptic finality is always unwanted, and thus she seeks to remove these poems from a narrative trajectory whose relationship to violence she recognizes. But the suspension of closure in romance may mark less the narrative's skepticism about such violence than a way of coming to terms with the problems and paradoxes of religious identity, in the newly complicated landscape of the sixteenth century.

In Book V of *The Faerie Queene*, certainly, the possibility of a "final solution" in Ireland remains one possible reading of what the narrative desires. But the question of violence and difference is more pervasively structured into the poem in its engagements with the romance Saracen. In the late sixteenth century, this figure of absolute alterity was the subject of an ongoing struggle. Both Reformation and Counter-Reformation polemicists turned representations of Islam against Christian enemies: both sides accused each other of fomenting schism for worldly ends, as "Mahomet" had done in his own time. As Christendom waged religious war against itself, poets like Tasso and Spenser turned to the medieval romances of crusade in an attempt to adapt that older narrative frame for a contemporary history. For Tasso, this meant a turn to the historical materials of the First Crusade. For Spenser, it meant a more fractured effort to come to terms with crusade romance, a genre associated with the Catholic past and dedicated to a project of Christian unity problematic for any committed Protestant.

In Books I and V of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser rewrites romance narratives of crusade in order to explore the problems of a Christendom at war with itself: above all, he tests the possibility of appropriating crusade romance as the enabling fiction not of an integral Christendom but of a Protestant nation. Spenser's generic choices are conditioned by the war at the heart of Christian identity in the sixteenth century. I hope to open up the historical logic underlying those choices, and to show how

his poem, by situating itself with respect to the conventions of romance, explores the meanings those conventions could have in the early modern period. Spenser's engagement with contemporary history is not only a matter of topical allegory: he explores history as a problem of narrative, and he engages that problem through his uses of a form already saturated with historical significance.

The early modern romances that feature Saracens encode, to varying degrees, a crusading impulse, a pressure for conquest or assimilation that often provides closure for the text. This is true even of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which, for all its irony and sophisticated sexiness, fits its stories into a narrative that moves from the siege of Paris to the capture of an African city. Although the poem repeatedly complicates any easy ethical distinctions between its Saracens and Christians—the first thing we see are “two rivals, of opposed belief” riding the same horse in pursuit of the same woman—it nevertheless progresses toward a realignment of clear differences. In the last canto, the Saracen hero Ruggiero converts and marries Bradamante, and in the poem's final stanza kills the only remaining Saracen champion, Rodomonte, sending his soul “cursing from the world” (1.22; 46.140). If the poem's wandering and diffuse narrative suggests a skepticism about crusade, there is also a moment when skepticism ceases.

Ariosto's almost endless errancy may encode a response to the fractured politics of sixteenth-century Italy. The poem continually glances toward a contemporary history of intra-Italian warfare and above all to the history of foreign invasions of Italy, culminating in the infamous sack of Rome by Charles V, an event that seems to have impelled some of Ariosto's final revisions for the third edition of his poem.²⁴ In a rhetoric that may well have proved resonant for Spenser, Ariosto at certain moments conflates his romance narrative with these narratives drawn from recent history, hinting that the invading Spanish Saracens of his story are in fact the same as the modern Spaniards in Italy, “who mostly served Mahomet” (42.5). The divided politics of the sixteenth century, in other words, infringe upon and complicate the narrative of crusade, evoking conflicts that cannot be contained in any narrative of holy war. In early seventeenth-century England, such passages perhaps encouraged the appropriation of Ariosto for a covert anti-Spanish rhetoric: in a series of continuations, adaptations, or allusions, Ariosto was newly politicized in Jacobean England, his poem made to serve those skeptical of the peace James had made with Catholic Spain.²⁵

The “romance epics” of the sixteenth century are often described as hybrid texts, pulled in opposite directions by the opposed impulses of

their constituent elements.²⁶ The plot of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, certainly, strains between the story of crusade and the wanderings and deceptions that must be overcome for crusade to become possible: the war is constantly interrupted by magical or Satanic influences or by the unruly desires of the Christian knights. Tasso's narrative thus focuses attention on the problem of dissent, and his resolution of the rival claims of errancy and epic represents a distinctly Counter-Reformation and anti-national poetics: space will be granted to the possibility of other and multiple paths, but in the end there is only one right way. The form of the poem itself expresses both an anxiety about a Christendom fragmenting into competing nations and sects, and the fantasy of a renewed unity, a restoration of Christendom as an effective and coherent religious and political community.²⁷

The poem repeatedly suggests the pressure of contemporary history underlying its representation of crusade. The eighth canto begins with the arrival of a messenger who relates the deaths of Prince Sven of Denmark and his soldiers at the hands of Solyman and the Turks. When the messenger finishes his story, Godfrey laments how "so friendly and valorous a troop one brief moment has taken away, and a little ground swallowed up." Crucially, at this point in the poem Godfrey identifies the messenger not as a Dane but a "German," even though the word "Dane" is elsewhere consistently used. The disappearance of a troop of loyal soldiers is linked to Germany, itself partly withdrawn from Catholic Christendom by Protestant schism.²⁸ The disappearance of these German or Danish allies, moreover, occurs when Solyman and the Turks first appear. Facing the Turks alone, the Germans are wiped out, in a story that must have recalled for any sixteenth-century reader the contemporary expansion of the Turkish empire at the cost of the "German" one, as well as contemporary prophecies of the conquest of Germany by the Turks.²⁹ At the same time, that story is heightened by a rebellion described in the same canto, which spreads from an Italian knight to the Swiss and the English, that is, to the Protestant nations (8.58). Crusade demands unity from a Christendom under attack. Protestantism threatens any hope of unity.

Tasso's text encodes a Counter-Reformation polemic that blames Protestantism for the continued power of the Turks, and sees in crusade the solution to Christian schism. For Tasso, the real enemy is the enemy within, the desire to stray that leads his heroes from their tasks; his Saracens, perhaps as a result, are allowed a real nobility, at moments, a nobility that also evokes Tasso's program of both adapting and overgoing the literary inheritance of classical epic. Spenser's

Saracens, on the other hand, offer little to be admired, and they are punished with a violence that admits only the most perfunctory expressions of pity. In the eighth canto of Book II, the “Paynim” brothers Pyrochles and Cymochles at first confidently promise Arthur’s death, swearing by “Mahoune” and “Termagant,” but then quickly abjure their gods: when Pyrochles is wounded by Arthur’s lance, “Horribly then he gan to rage, and rayle, / Cursing his gods, and himselfe damning deepe” (2.8.37). Arthur offers Pyrochles his life if he will renounce his “miscreaunce” and convert, but “the Sarazin” defies him, and Arthur responds brutally:

Wroth was the Prince, and sory yet withall,
That he so wilfully refused grace;
Yet sith his fate so cruelly did fall,
His shining Helmet he gan soone vnlace,
And left his headlesse body bleeding all the place. (2.8.52)

Arthur offers “grace,” but the Saracen’s refusal condemns him to be ruled not by Christian mercy but by “fate.” The rhymes on “grace,” “vnlace,” and “place” suggest an inexorable movement from Pyrochles’s refusal to his beheading.

In *The Faerie Queene*, the path toward the moral self-fashioning of the knights repeatedly involves the overcoming of Saracens: in the eighth canto of every book except Book III, Arthur fights Saracens and rescues the knights so that they can continue their quests. Arthur, as various critics have recognized, often functions as a figure for divine grace: he appears in the eighth canto because eight is the number of regeneration; he carries the shield of faith; and he is at various times associated with divine, redemptive power.³⁰ When he fights them, his enemies are described as Saracens even if, like Pyrochles and Cymochles, they are never so described elsewhere. As in Tasso, the Saracens are caught up with the representation of grace insofar as they are the objects of Arthur’s divinely inspired violence.

Spenser uses this figure of difference to explore the possibility of an England that embodies the militancy of faith in concrete political action. This question about religion and politics—about literal and spiritual readings of Paul’s “whole armor of God”—receives its most intense scrutiny in two episodes of Book V. In canto two, Artegall learns of the crimes of Pollente, a “cursed cruell Sarazin” who keeps the passage of a bridge (5.2.4). This figure of unjust subjection lives with his daughter Munera, who has heaped up her father’s spoils until she has exceeded “many Princes” in wealth (9). When Artegall hears

of this, he seeks out Pollente and strikes off the head of this blaspheming "Carle vnblest" (12; 18–20). If Pollente and Munera are figures for forms of financial extortion that distort social hierarchy by offering power disproportionate to rank, the fight against those secular perversions of justice is imagined as a holy war.³¹

In canto eight Spenser depicts another battle with a Saracen that reinforces the point that we are enjoined by God to fight injustice: here we see the war between Mercilla and the Souldan fought on Mercilla's behalf by Arthur and Artegall. The Souldan is a "miscreant" who has neither "religion nor fay, / But makes his God of his vngodly pelfe, / And Idols serues" (5.8.19). Like Pollente, he values gold over God, and in fact conflates gold with God in his idolatry; unlike Pollente, he is defeated only when Arthur resorts to the shield of faith, a weapon he has not used since the Book of Holiness.

The Souldan is Mercilla's great enemy, a "mighty man" who "seekes to subuert her Crowne and dignity": "her good knights" he "either spoiles, if they against him stand, / Or to his part allures, and bribeth vnder hand" (5.8.18). The figure of the sultan as both powerful enemy and beneficial lord was conventional in romances like *Bevis of Hampton* and *Huon of Bordeaux* as well as in romance-inflected texts like *Mandeville's Travels*. Mandeville claims that the sultan of Egypt "would have married me richly with a great prince's daughter and given me many great lordships, so that I would have forsaken my belief and turned to theirs; but I would not."³² Thomas Dallam, a musician sent by Elizabeth to Istanbul in the late 1590s to deliver an elaborate mechanical organ as a gift for Sultan Mehmed III, writes about a similar promise, in the journal of his voyage. After describing his performance for the sultan and the court, Dallam recounts how "tow jemoglans"—that is, two *acemi oĝlan*, two converted Christian boys who were being trained in the military and administrative schools of the Ottoman government—asked whether he "would be contented to stay with them always," promising that the sultan would give him "tow wyfes, ether tow of his Concubines or els tow virgins of the beste I could Chuse my selfe, in Cittie or contrie."³³

At the same time, Spenser's description of the Souldan looks to an enemy closer at hand, Philip of Spain and his Armada, as John Upton traces in detail: the Souldan's chariot figures the Spanish ships, the scattering of his horses the scattering of those ships, his blasphemous "banning" the excommunication of Elizabeth.³⁴ In choosing to figure Philip as a sultan, Spenser perhaps follows an English polemic that associates early modern Spain with its Islamic history. "The *Mores*" ruled Spain for 800 years, Edward Daunce noted in 1590, "during

which time, we must not thinke that the *Negros* sent for women out of *Aphrick*." Spenser himself wrote that the Arab invasions left Spain a mongrel nation.³⁵ Such reminders countered the rhetoric of the Armada, which claimed to be a crusade against heretics: the pope proclaimed indulgences for the sailors and the ships were decorated with banners displaying crusade insignia, a fact that could not have escaped the English when they hung those banners in celebration.³⁶ The specific association of Philip II with a sultan, moreover, seems itself to have constituted an ongoing Protestant polemic: years later, reflecting back on this moment in history, Fulke Greville would refer to Philip as the "Suleiman of Spain"; and a manuscript at the Huntington Library presents in parallel "The kinge of Spayne his style" and "the great Turk his style," inviting comparisons between the Habsburgs and their Ottoman enemies precisely on the basis of their mutual imperial claims.³⁷

By representing Philip as a sultan, Spenser turns Philip's claim to be fighting a holy war against him. The story of the fight with the Souldan also recalls and reverses Tasso, using the romance narrative of crusade to reassert the singleness of Christian faith while reserving that singleness not for a reunited Christendom but for the Protestant nation. In this sense, the episode represents the culmination of a series of encounters between Christian and Saracen knights that extends back to the first pages of *The Faerie Queene*. And yet, if this is so, the episode is oddly decentered. It does not appear at a climactic moment, nor does it complete either the allegory of justice or the ongoing fight with the Saracens. The conflicts of Book V resume right afterward and remain famously unresolved, and the Souldan is not the last Saracen in the poem: in the eighth canto of Book VI Arthur again fights an infidel who swears by Mahound and Termagant. In Spenser's poem, crusade cannot bring closure to the problem of faithlessness. Tasso's narrative constantly strains toward a final victory. But Spenser decenters crusade even as his allegory, by multiplying the forms of false belief, problematizes the representation of any single, final victory over faithlessness.

Moreover, there are troubling questions to be asked about this scene of Protestant crusade even when it does come. Where is the knight of holiness, who at the end of Book I seems intent on undertaking this war? And why is the attack on the Souldan managed through a piece of deception? As Arthur and Arthegall approach "the Souldan's court," each disguises himself "in th'armour of a Pagan knight," while Samient pretends to be their captive, their "purchast prize."³⁸ England's victory over the Armada is won as though by two Saracens, in a scene of impersonation worthy of Archimago, a scene

that, at least outwardly, calls into question the polarities of religious identity on which crusade romance depends. Spenser seems at once to write and to resist crusade romance.

By imagining Philip as a sultan, Spenser engages a Reformation polemic about the historical and prophetic interpretation of Islam: he assimilates Catholicism and Islam by assimilating romance to Protestant apocalyptic histories, which emphasized the identity of Islam and Catholicism as manifestations of Antichrist and forms of false belief. In the Middle Ages, interest in Islam already tended to move in tandem with anxieties about church reform. On the one hand, Islam seemed to be the purest form of false religion: although in places like Spain, Sicily, and the Levant the Middle Ages saw real forms of cultural exchange between Christians and Muslims, medieval anti-Islamic polemics nevertheless described Islam as a blasphemous parody of Christianity.³⁹ But parody requires proximity, and Islam was also imagined to bear an intimate relationship to Christianity. Medieval legends claimed that Muhammad invented his religion under the tutelage of the heretical monk Sergius or identified Muhammad himself as a renegade Christian, a cardinal who had been passed over for the papacy.⁴⁰ To Dante, he was a "seminator di scandalo e di scisma," a sower of scandal and schism; the encounter with Muhammad in the *Inferno* is bracketed by an encounter with Guido da Montefeltro which evokes the need for church reform, and by Muhammad's message to the heretical "Pseudo-Apostles" of Fra Dolcino, at that moment already dead at the hands of a papal army. That is, Dante places Islam squarely between the demand for reform and the danger of heresy.⁴¹

The corollary of the assertion that Islam is a Christian heresy was that Christianity itself nursed a hidden Islamicization. The author of one Lollard tract compares anyone who opposes the ready availability of scripture to "Makamete and Surgeus the monk," who "maden a lawe after ther owne malice and token sumwhat of the gosepel to a fleschly vnderstandynge."⁴² The corrupt church, substituting human traditions for the gospel, imitates Islam. In Islam, medieval polemicists thought they had the example of a claim to reform gone wrong. From this point on, any effort to imagine a reformed Christianity would have to come to terms with the specter of Islam; but so, too, would any effort to defend the church in its existing form.

Thomas More repeatedly accused the Protestants of imitating Turks; among loyal Catholics, this seems to have become something of a polemical code.⁴³ The reformers turned such charges back against the Catholics.⁴⁴ In 1518, Luther's discussion of the remission of sins

turned into an angry argument about the theological implications of Turkish power, in which he asserted that to resist the Turks was to resist the judgment of God.⁴⁵ He abandoned this position in *On War Against the Turks*, but renewed his attack on crusades and indulgences and described Catholic theology as an Islamicization of Christianity.⁴⁶ The pope, he wrote,

is not much more godly than Muhammad and looks very much like him, for he, too, pays lip service to the gospels and all the holy scriptures, but he believes that many parts of them are too difficult and impossible, and these are the very parts that the Turks and Muhammad also consider too difficult . . . [The pope rules] not with the gospels or the word of God, but has also made a new law and Alcoran, namely, his Decretal, and this he enforces with excommunication, just as the Turk enforces his Koran with the sword.⁴⁷

As Luther twice asserts in *Table Talk*, “The pope is the spirit of antichrist, and the Turk the flesh of antichrist.”⁴⁸

Several images produced by Albrecht Dürer and Matthias Gerung register this rhetoric in iconic form. In the eleventh woodcut illustration for his *Apocalypse*—produced well before the Reformation, but often interpreted as anticipating some of its critiques—Dürer places side by side among the worshippers of the dragon of Revelation 17 a pope and a sultan, both joined in supplication or prayer.⁴⁹ In the foreground of a woodcut by Gerung, Catholic and Islamic armies clash, but this war only reveals how similar the two enemies are: the pope rides a lion-headed beast, opposite a devilish figure on an identical beast, riding beside a sultan. Monsters or devils appear with both armies, and above each army floats the book of false laws for which it fights, one labeled “Decret” and the other “Alcoran.” In the clouds above, Christ preaches to an angelic host that has turned its back on both of these infidel armies.⁵⁰

This polemic shapes some of the central texts of the English Reformation.⁵¹ Perhaps the most readily available English text on Islam appears in the 1570 *Actes and Monumentes*, in which John Foxe enters into what seems to be a long digression from his history of martyrs: forty-five folio pages discussing the “Turkes storie” and “Prophecies concerning the Turkes and Antichrist.”⁵² Foxe’s Turkish history ends with a “prayer agaynst the Turkes,” but this prayer turns out to be only in part what it promises:

Renewe in thys thy Church agayne, the decayed fayth of thy sonne
Iesus . . . And forgeue our wretched Idolatric, and blinde phantasies

past, wherwith we haue prouoked manyfolde wayes, thy deserued indignation . . . Miserably we haue walked hetherto, like sonnes not of Sara, but of Agar, and therefore these Turkishe Agarens haue risen vp against vs. (2L2v)

This is not a prayer for protection against the Turks but a prayer for reform: in it, Turks and erring Christians alike are "Agarens," descendants of Hagar, not Sara. The corruption of doctrine threatens any sense of the difference between Christian and infidel.

When Foxe writes of the Turks he writes also of Christian weakness, discord, and sin. "For though the Turke semeth to bee farre of," he warns, "yet do wee nourishe within our owne breastes at home, that may soone cause vs to feele his cruell hand" (2G5v). Islam is a divine punishment, and the rise of the Turks, in particular, is a punishment for the consolidation of Catholic doctrine:

after the decree of Transubstantiation was enacted in the Councell of *Laterane* by Pope *Innoce[n]t* the iij. the yeare of our Lord .1215. not long after, about the yeare of our Lord .1260. was styred vp the power and armes of the *Oguzians*, and of *Orthogules* father of *Ottomannus*: Who about the yeare of our Lord .1294. began first to vex the Christians about *Pontus* and *Bithynia*.⁵³

A marginal note draws the lesson succinctly: "The tyme of Transubstantiation. The tyme of the Turkes" (2K5v). Foxe uses this history to interpret a series of scriptural and other prophecies, which he claims can be clarified by a historical analysis that recognizes in the pope the true Antichrist, but in the Turks a punishment for being seduced by Antichrist. Moreover, he places his Turkish history between the story of Julius II and that of the Henrician Reformation, so that, even structurally, the history of Islam appears to prove his thesis: papal violence provokes Turkish violence, and the solution to both lies in the continuing process of reform.

Foxe's discussion of Islam is localized in one section of his enormous book; John Bale, on the other hand, constantly glances at Islam in the course of his reading of Revelation.⁵⁴ For Bale, the supposed complicity of Islam and Catholicism suggests not only a historical reading of prophetic scripture but also a way of reimagining Christian identity by reimagining the literary forms in which that identity could be narrated. Bale's rhetoric repeatedly hints that the reformation of religion also demands a refashioning of literature. It was Bale, I want to suggest, who had the most direct impact on Spenser's rewriting of crusade romance in *The Faerie Queene*.

Spenser's apocalypticism has often been traced to *The Image of bothe Churches*, in which Bale reads the two women of Revelation—the “meke spouse of the lambe without spot” and the “rose coloured whore”—as figures of true and false faith. But although Spenserians have generally recognized Bale's women behind Spenser's Una and Duessa, no one has acknowledged the multiple forms of false faith Bale actually addresses. “Rome the mother of all whordome,” he writes, “had subiect vnto her the .vij. clymates or vniuersal partes of the worlde”; and now, though many heads have grown from that Roman Antichrist, the body is still the same: “I do take it for one vniuersal Antichrist . . . comprehending in hym so well Mahomete as the Pope, so well y^e ragyng tyraunt as the still hypocryte, & all that wickedli worketh are of thesame body” (g5v–g6r). Islam and Catholicism are the dual inheritors of Rome's legacy, splitting between them the world once ruled by a single empire. This recognition of a double Antichrist permits Bale to redraw the line between the faithful and the faithless. A Protestant exposition of scripture must assert that not all who profess to be Christians really are; in effect, the distinction between infidel and faithful is recapitulated within Christendom. The visible Christian church is a lie concealing the secret, almost invisible history of the true church. In this way Protestants can claim to be the small congregation of the elect, while Catholics are grouped among the outcasts and infidels, and revealed as a kind of Turks in disguise.

According to Bale, both Catholicism and Islam foster a scrupulous but empty observance of outward signs of faith. The fact that the actual rituals differ is of no consequence: all ritual represents the same violation, the same refusal to recognize faith alone as the path to salvation, and thus the same abjuration of Christ, scripture, and salvation. “The pope in hys churche hath ceremonies wythout nombre,” Bale warns, and “Mahomete in his church is plentuouse also in holye obseruations” (B4v). Both attempt to seduce the faithful with glorious appearances, so that “a man seyng the^m . . . wolde thynke nothyng too be more pure, honest, godly, innocent, cleane, holy, & angelyck, than are theyr tradicions” (2H8v). But this profusion of outward observances conceals an inward emptiness. On the one hand, Bale emphasizes the multiplicity of ceremonies, and on the other hand he asserts that all of these external forms must be recognized as aspects of the same departure from true doctrine. Bale writes of “Popishe ceremonies without nombre,” which in fact he tries to number, or at least to suggest in their almost infinite variety: “None ende is there of theyr babiling prayers, theyr portases, bedes, temples, aulters songes, houres, belles, Images, organes, ornameⁿtes, Jewels, lyghtes, oylnges,

shauinges, religions, disgisinges[,] diuersite of feastes, constraigned vowes, fastinges, processions, & pratlinges" (B4v). But this overwhelming multiplicity of evils is reduced to a single turning away from the doctrine of faith, an apostasy that is the same wherever it occurs:

The same abhominacions mayntaine they the worlde ouer, that the pope mayntayneth at Rome, & Mahomete in Barbary, of [or?] Turkye. Yea, the same supersticions and sorceryes, the same execrable tradicions and beggeryes. The same ceremonies haue they, . . . the same orders, and the same masses. (i3v)

The difference of Christian and infidel gives place to the difference of inward religious faith from outward irreligious ritual. It is a lesson Bale no doubt learned from Luther, who claimed in his 1531 lectures on Galatians that Judaism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestant sectarianism were all versions of the same error: "there is all one and the same reason, the same heart, opinion, and cogitation in them all."⁵⁵

This hidden resemblance between Islam and Catholicism requires a new conception of what it means to be Christian, and this in turn requires a new kind of narrative. In his commentary on chapter eleven Bale writes that "the beast of the bottomlesse pitte" is "the pope with his bishoppes . . . in Europa, Mahomete with his dottinge dousepers in Affrica, and so forth in Asia and India, all beastlye, carnall, and wicked" (b7v). Elsewhere Bale compares "mytered Mahometes" and Catholic prelates to "Mahoundes in a play" (g1v; h1r; i3r). "Mahound" is familiar as the idol of the Saracens in romance. The word "dousepers" Bale also extracts from romance: it is a Middle English corruption of the French "douze pers," the twelve peers, Charlemagne's crusading companions. When Bale imagines the "dousepers" of "Mahomete" and when he calls Catholic priests "Mahounds," he collapses romance terms of difference.⁵⁶

Bale expresses the secret Catholic complicity with "the Saracens" through a fracturing of romance. English reformers like Roger Ascham repeatedly voiced their antipathy to romance as a frivolous, licentious, and Catholic literary form.⁵⁷ For Bale, the problem of romance is that it is deceptive, like ceremonial religion itself: its terms of inclusion and exclusion reflect the appearance rather than the reality of faith, and it reposes itself too comfortably in the supposedly absolute difference of the Saracen. The literary form that Bale sought to adapt to Protestant ends was the religious drama, not the romance, despite his evident familiarity with romance, and despite the drama's own borrowings from romance. Bale left a real problem for any

author seeking to revitalize romance for Protestant England. I want to suggest that we can see Spenser responding to this apparent impasse in *The Faerie Queene*, and especially in the book most indebted to Bale's apocalyptic vision, the book of Holiness.

The Saracens play a larger role in Book I of *The Faerie Queene* than in any other book. Three Saracen brothers appear there, named Sansfoy, Sansioy, and Sansloy, without faith, without joy, and without law (1.2.25). These three share a genealogy with Duessa and Night: Night is the mother of Deceit and the grandmother of Duessa, and the Saracens are "nephews" of Night, whose family is engaged in a struggle with the children of Day, ruled by Jove (1.3.38; 1.5.22). The antithesis that drives Book I, between Una and Duessa, the true and the false church, is linked to the struggle of Day and Night, male gods and female demons, Christians and Saracens.

Duessa is repeatedly associated with her Saracen relatives. She enters the poem in Sansfoy's company, and although she later claims to have been his captive, at the time Redcross first sees them they are engaged in "mirth and wanton play" (1.2.14). After Sansioy discovers Redcross and Duessa in the House of Pride and recognizes Redcross as his brother's killer, Duessa slips at night into the Saracen's room, addressing him as "deare *Sans ioy*, next dearest to *Sans foy*." "To thy secret faith I flye," she promises; "where euer yet I be, my secrete aid / Shall follow you" (1.4.45; 51). When the two men fight in the next canto, she calls out, "Thine the shield, and I, and all" (1.5.11). Comically, or perhaps pathetically, Redcross believes the words are directed to him, a misunderstanding made all the more ironic when the words intended for Sansioy revive Redcross out of his "swowning dreame" to strike a blow in the next stanza that brings the Saracen to his knees—at which point Duessa intervenes and saves him (1.5.12).

Duessa, the figure of duplicity—both deception and doubleness—links Catholicism to the Saracens. The scriptural allusions that cluster around her suggest a complicity with eastern empires: she is "clad in scarlot red" and wears "A *Persian* mitre." Her red dress identifies her as the Whore of Babylon from Revelation, and her mitre links her with Babylon and—in Protestant exegesis—with Rome.⁵⁸ But when Spenser brings this double-faced figure into a romance that also includes Saracens, he underscores the problem of recognition that Duessa poses. How can the Christian knight resist these many-faced infidels, when he cannot see the secret faith that unites them?

When he fights the Saracens, "the Redcross knight"—who both carries and is named for the cross of the crusades—falls into unbelief

himself. He kills the "faithlesse Sarazin" Sansfoy only to take his place as Duessa's lover (1.2.12). The doubling of crusader and infidel is suggested when the two knights fight: both are "fell and furious," and both merge without difference in a stanza-long simile that compares them to "two rams stird with ambitious pride" (1.2.15–16). This is of course a thoroughly conventional gesture in heroic poetry, but in this context, it eviscerates the supposed ethical and religious differences of the combatants, rendering them simply as rivals and mirror images of each other. Two stanzas later, when one of them strikes the other, it is difficult to tell which is which. "Vpon his crest / With rigour so outrageous he smitt," Spenser writes, and only in the following stanza can the reader retrospectively assign the pronoun. Spenser suggests the same collapse of behavior and motivation when Redcross fights Sansioy, grammatically joining the combatants as dual subjects of the same sentence: they both desire "To be aueng'd each on his enemy." Vengeance and pride are the common emotional matrix of Redcross and the Saracens, and the word "enemy" here signals no more than a symmetrical rivalry (1.4.43).

Redcross's failure to understand the significance of his own armor similarly suggests his metamorphosis into a kind of Saracen. That armor is, as Spenser points out in the "Letter to Raleigh," the "whole armour of God" from Ephesians, the armor not of the chivalric knight but of the Christian warrior. Redcross embodies a Pauline discourse of Christian militancy. After defeating Sansfoy, Redcross takes "The *Sarazins* shield, signe of the conqueroure" (1.2.20) and carries it into the House of Pride where he encounters another knight armed with a "heathenish shield," Sansioy, who recognizes him because he holds Sansfoy's shield "renuerst" (1.4.38; 41). When Redcross takes up Sansfoy's shield and carries it upside-down, he shows himself committed to a code of knightly prowess and self-assertion whose signs are legible to the Saracens: that is, he misinterprets his own armor, separating the chivalric culture of violence from the spiritual struggle it supposedly embodies.

Undertaking war against the Saracens only brings the crusader closer to the infidel, and emphasizes the conjunction of opposites inevitable in the confusion of a fight: as Foxe writes, "We warre agaynst the *Turke* with our workes, masses, traditions, and ceremonies: but we fight not against him with Christ" (2G4v). In the historical allegory of Book I, this is a point about the crusades themselves. If the sin that provoked the rise of the Ottoman Empire was the promulgation of transubstantiation in 1215, that act marked the high point of a period of increasing papal power associated by Protestants with the history of

the crusades. Bale argued that the popes had used crusades to occupy the secular princes abroad while they consolidated power at home, and in this he linked the reforms instituted by Gregory VII with the crusades preached by his successor, "Turban" II.⁵⁹ The joke on Urban's name was repeated by Samuel Purchas, Thomas Fuller, and—with a variation—by that expert parodist of godly rhetoric, Falstaff, who claims at Shrewsbury to have outdone "Turk Gregory."⁶⁰

Wars of faith turn out to be wars of faithlessness, fought by enemies who cannot be distinguished. This idea is powerfully suggested in canto three, when Una meets someone she thinks is Redcross, though it is in fact a disguised Archimago (1.2.11; 1.3.26). Una now accompanies a false knight, just as Redcross accompanies Duessa. Both pairs immediately encounter Saracens: Redcross meets Sansfoy and Duessa as soon as he has parted from Una, and in canto three Una and Archimago meet an enraged Sansloy, whose looks threaten "cruell reuenge" for the death of his brother in the previous canto (1.3.33). Sansloy mistakes Archimago for Redcross, attacks him, unseats him, and dismounts to finish him off (1.3.35). But what he discovers when he removes his opponent's helmet is not what he expected:

Why *Archimago*, luckless syre,
What doe I see? What hard mishap is this,
That hath thee hither brought to taste mine yre?
Or thine the fault, or mine the error is,
In stead of foe to wound my friend amis? (1.3.39)

Sansloy's recognition of Archimago emblemizes the many forms of faithlessness that threaten Redcross and Una, and the complicity of their open and hidden enemies.

The moment also underscores a suggestion made earlier in the canto, in the story of Abessa and Kirkrapine. That story has frustrated critics because it seems to suggest a strange intimacy. Abessa, whose name recalls the abbeys dissolved by Henry VIII and whose mother spends her time counting beads (1.3.13), turns out to be the lover of Kirkrapine, whose habits suggest puritan iconoclasm and opposition to clerical vestments: he is "wont to robbe Churches of their ornaments," to "disrobe" the "holy Saints of their rich vestments" and "the Priests of their habiliments."⁶¹ Puritan iconoclasm is oddly joined to Catholic devotion. But seen in conjunction with the story in the second half of the canto, this odd couple, too, makes sense: in its conviction that the destruction of images is a holy work, a wild iconoclasm paradoxically becomes a kind of idolatry, an over-investment in objects. Puritan, Catholic, and Saracen mirror each other, and the

canto as a whole evokes a vision of the many enemies of the true faith whose apparent conflicts conceal their secret faith to each other. At the same time, the multivalent faithlessness rendered in this canto suggests the difficulty of any Protestant appropriation of crusade romance, since the most hard-line anti-Catholicism turns out, paradoxically, to repeat the errors of both Saracens and Catholics.

The narrative of Book I both evokes the desire for crusade and frustrates that desire, by exposing Redcross's blindness, his inability to distinguish friend from foe. Redcross's misguided fights suggest the limits of a crusading ethos, which depends on a human claim to be able to do God's work, a claim that in Book I of *The Faerie Queene* is always suspect. Redcross's investment in his own chivalric power first aligns him with the Saracens, then leaves him vulnerable to another Saracen figure: Orgoglio, whose name recalls the last word of the *Orlando Furioso*, where the king of Algiers is described as "sì altiera al mondo e sì orgogliosa."⁶²

The fight with the dragon underscores the problem, in its turn from crusade narrative to apocalypse. Redcross's victory here is paradoxically achieved through failure, through a divine rescue that takes effect precisely when his own strength fails him (1.11.29, 46). When the fight is over, Una praises God and thanks "her faithful knight, / That had atchieu'd so great a conquest by his might" (1.11.55). Whose might does she mean, Redcross's or God's? The ambiguity, as A.C. Hamilton suggests, blurs the line between human and divine power and renders uncertain the value of human acts. "Might" is at other points associated more with the figures of faithlessness, with the "matchlesse might" of Orgoglio (1.7.10), or with the Souldan, that "mighty man" (5.8.18). We are left with a problem of recognition: we must distinguish merely earthly power from a power that mediates the divine, and only when we are certain of this distinction can we be certain of the status of our own work. But how can we know? The distinguishing mark of Spenser's Saracens is their elevation of worldly might over all else; but does it then follow that the true believer must quietly withdraw into the confines of an inner faith, a passive, private domain of belief?

Redcross seems to suggest as much when he vows to give up fighting altogether: "bloud can noght but sin, and wars but sorrowes yield," Contemplation assures him, and Redcross promises "shortly" to return "in Pilgrims poore estate" (1.10.60, 64). But when Una's father suggests that they "deuize of ease and euerlasting rest," Redcross answers that he is bound "to returne to that great Faerie Queene, / And her to serue six yeares in warlike wize, / Gainst that

proud Paynim king, that workes her teene" (1.10.18). Here he seems to believe that he will fight a holy war after all, and Spenser appears to corroborate this: just before the fight with the dragon, he invokes his muse, but asks her to come "gently," laying aside the "mighty rage" of "great Heroës" until the time comes to sing of Briton fields dyed with Saracen blood (1.11.5–6). For now, he will sing "this man of God his godly armes" (7). It may seem peculiar to think of a "gentle" poetry as being appropriate for Revelation, but the point seems to be that the fight with the dragon is a spiritual struggle, not a worldly one; and yet, it is a spiritual struggle that in some sense prepares the way for that later, holy war.

When we get to the episode that seems to fulfill this promise, however, Redcross is nowhere to be seen. As James Nohrnberg has observed, whereas Book I promises a "full-dress treatment" of the defeat of the Armada, "when we come to the legend of justice, the subject has been abbreviated to an episode in the historical allegory."⁶³ The apparent disjunction forces us to think about the place of the war with Spain in the long narrative of British history, on the one hand, and in the even longer trajectory of prophetic history, on the other—that is, to think about how faith translates into politics. Between Books I and V, Spenser suggests the place of the Fairy Queen's victory over the Paynim king in the wider history of the "British" Tudors, as described by Merlin in Book III. The British princes will be displaced by the pagan Saxons, but they will return under a virgin queen descended from the knights of chastity and justice, to restore the true faith to their kingdom. This narrative of exile and return is bracketed by two wars against pagan enemies, first the war against the Saxons, and then the war "ouer the *Belgicke* shore" against "the great Castle," that is, Philip of Castile (3.3.49). The defeat of Philip in the guise of the Souldan promises to resolve the long struggle for England, and crusade romance promises to translate itself into the history of the Protestant nation: the godly nation, that is, will take the place of a lost Christendom, dissolved in religious war and in secret allegiances.

Merlin emphasizes the apocalyptic meaning of this victory with the last words of his prophecy, "But yet the end is not," words that echo but also defer Revelation's promise that "the time is at hand."⁶⁴ Spenser's treatment of history refuses resolution, as the episodes that follow the fight with the Souldan progressively frustrate the sense of an ending. The Spanish Armada is defeated, the Queen of Scots executed, and yet the faithful must still struggle against unbelief and injustice in the Netherlands, France, and Ireland. The narrative multiplies the

scenes of engagement demanded by a faith that wants to exercise itself politically, and it leaves that struggle famously incomplete, ending with Artegall recalled to court before he can "reforme" Ireland (5.12.27). Finally, and most famously, the projected structure of the poem with its cycle of virtues itself collapses into the fragmentary Book VII, and the poem ends looking forward to the time "when no more *Change* shall be, / But stedfast rest of all things firmly stayd / Vpon the pillours of Eternity" (7.8.2). The final line both evokes and frustrates this desire, calling on a "Sabbaoth God" who may be the God of the Sabbath, but may also be the God of Hosts who, in Paul's paraphrase of Isaiah, will save a small remnant, but will make "a short word . . . on earth."⁶⁵ The poem ends acknowledging the necessity of continued labor while longing for the moment when the struggle of the faithful will be cut short by God's short word.

Where crusade romance moves through narrative errancy and indeterminacy toward a renewed clarification, toward a realignment of self and other, Spenser defers that promise. No earthly authority resolves the problem of duplicity and serves, like Tasso's Godfrey, to guarantee the union of human effort and divine will, nor does a prophesied event, like the conversion of Ariosto's Ruggiero, enable the wandering narrative to return to the secure port of an epic teleology. We never arrive at Gloriana's court, never see Elizabeth's apotheosis into the Faery Queen or Arthur's arrival on the throne. In Book V, a godly England almost emerges to replace Christendom as the political embodiment of the true faith. But at the end of the poem we are left with the possibility that the true Christendom may manifest itself only in the community of the elect, a community that will not gather until the end of time: the possibility, in other words, that there may be no such thing as a godly politics, no such thing as either Christendom or the elect nation. Crusade—which unites political action and divine ends, the church militant and the military nation—appears in Spenser as a deferred promise. Moreover, even when it is figured in the narrative, it involves Spenser's heroes—like Arthur and Arthegall riding "in th'armour of a Pagan knight"—in a problematic association with the very figure of the enemy they are fighting.

In this, Spenser may approach something like Bale's sense of the inadequacy of romance for telling the story of Protestant faith. For Bale, this skepticism ultimately seems to include all narrative: as he writes, Revelation is "no storye . . . [but] a misterye." The events it depicts are not the elements of a narrative but expressions of symbolic relations that are beyond narrative, just as its subject is finally the end of history, time, and narrative, in the kingdom of heaven (i6v–i7r).

And yet, at the same time, this deferral of crusade for apocalypse also suggests the close relationship between them: although the possibility of a sacred violence has perhaps been removed from human to divine agency, it is still toward such violence that Spenser's narrative strains. To defer the moment of clarity, to defer sacred violence to the time of a messianic arrival that will make all things new first by destroying all the things that now are, is still to preserve violence as the telos of narrative movement.

To figure the war with Spain as a holy one is also to disavow all real forms of contact between England and Islam, precisely at the moment when England was seeking military aid against Spain from both Morocco and the Ottoman Empire. I will discuss the cultural effects of this alliance in more detail in chapter 2; for now, I only want to note that Spenser's use of crusade narrative to figure divisions internal to a troubled Christendom in effect writes Islam out of the story. In this context, it is interesting that Christopher Marlowe decided to appropriate Spenser's description of Arthur for the self-description of his Scythian conqueror:

in my helme a triple plume shal spring,
Spangled with Diamonds dancing in the aire,
To note me Emperour of the three fold world:
Like to an almond tree ymounted high,
Upon the lofty and celestiall mount,
Of ever greene *Selinus* queintly dect
With bloomes more white then *Hericinas* browes,
Whose tender blossomes tremble every one,
At every little breath that thorow heaven is blowen.⁶⁶

Tamburlaine seeks to overgo Spenser, imagining a plume spangled not just with gold and pearl but with "Diamonds," a piece of rhetorical and sartorial inflation that may borrow from Spenser's description of Arthur's shield, "all of Diamond perfect pure and cleere" (1.7.33). Arthur's shield has the power to dispel all enchantment, and in the next canto the blaze of that shield blinds Orgoglio, "As where th' Almightyes lightning brond does light / It dimmes the dazed eyen" (1.8.21). Spenser follows Tasso in rewriting the magical shield of romance, making its magic the expression of a divine will and power. Tamburlaine turns it back into the material from which it was made.

Marlowe's borrowing may encode a glancing recognition of what Spenser has left out of his account of the geography of early modern religious difference: the awkward fact that it was precisely a militant Protestant agenda that drove England into the arms of "Turks" and

"Sarazins." It may even ask us to remember that Spenser's description of Arthur's helmet itself borrows from and transforms Tasso's description of the helmet of his Turkish sultan, Solyman.⁶⁷ From one perspective, this is the real secret faith, the most secret faith, in Spenser's text: the faith England quietly kept with those other nations of iconoclasts, Morocco and the Ottoman Empire—a faith perhaps obliquely registered when Spenser puts Arthegall in a Saracen disguise so convincing that the Souldan's wife, looking out of her window, is convinced he is "her Paynim Knight" (5.8.26).

But this is the story of the next chapter. For now, I only want to point out that Spenser's reorientation of crusade romance seems to leave him without a way of representing the encounter with Islam itself: the "Saracen" becomes a symptom of Catholic error or a displaced, allegorical representation of war against Catholicism. As a result, when Spenser turns his attention to the contemporary history of Anglo-Islamic contact in the form of captivity narrative, the story he offers is fractured, hesitant, divided against itself. Spenser can offer no real account of the encounter between Islam and Christianity because he has already so problematized the very terms "Islam" and "Christianity." He has used the figure of the Saracen to diagnose a fundamental, secret betrayal of Christianity from within, the "secret faith" that binds some Christians to the world of the Saracens.

Between them, *Zelauto* and *The Faerie Queene* subject the romance representation of the Saracen to a double reading, one that addresses both the enemy abroad and another, secret enemy at home. Spenser and Munday thereby install the "Saracen" at the very heart of English religious politics. In so doing, they open up the question of Christendom for a late-sixteenth-century moment. Does the *respublica Christiana* any longer have meaning? That is, is it still *res publica*, does it still have public and political being in the world, or must it now be imagined in synecdoche, an absent whole always only to be extracted from some symbolic or representative fragment? The question raised by these texts fundamentally concerns "the Christian," its possibility or impossibility, at the intersection of theology and politics, in the moment of cross-cultural contact and religious schism.

The "Saracen," in other words, resides at the center of English politics: the representation of the Saracen addresses not only the question of cross-cultural contacts but also the constitution of conflicted and overlapping identities, English, Christian, Catholic, Protestant. In this way, the encounter with Islam—an encounter variously demanded by commercial, diplomatic, and military histories—should be understood as vital to the self-constitution of Protestant England in the late

sixteenth century. I have tried to suggest the continuous presence of Islam in Reformation literature; this pervasive presence testifies to the importance of the "Saracen," in the making and remaking of early modern identities.

It testifies also to the sense that those identities are fashioned in a state of war: in both Munday and Spenser, it is the circulation of violence that defines the constitution of religious identities. In Munday, this takes the form of state violence against religious minorities; in Spenser, the form of a divinely inspired violence that turns the individual knight into a vehicle of God's justice. In either case, we are invited to witness a scene of war in which the representation of a contested, shifting sense of religious difference expresses itself in moments of violent execution. In Spenser, the moment of violence seeks to produce clarity, to impose certainty on an otherwise confused, deceptive, duplicitous world. In Munday, the movement is in the opposite direction, toward doubt and ideological uncertainty, as the text evokes behind Munday's Persia an England that is itself the site of multiple forms of religious violence. Romance enables a focus on the embattled scene of identity-formation. Its stance toward that violence is more ambivalent than Patricia Parker suggests when she reads romance as a means of deferring messianic violence: the chivalric fictions of romance provide, rather, a narrative form for exploring the political embodiments of Christian identity.

Both *Zelauto* and *The Faerie Queene* are unfinished works. This is no doubt a coincidence, but perhaps it can also be read as the sign of a fragmentation at work within early modern romance, a contradiction or ambivalence affecting the ideologies and identities produced by romance. The same forces that made romance a rich and resonant form in the early modern period also threatened its coherence, its capacity to negotiate competing historical pressures or to resolve the paradoxes opened in the fiction of Saracen difference by both Munday and Spenser.

CHAPTER 2



LEAVING CLARIBEL

We know little of the king's fair daughter Claribel.

—H.D.¹

The previous chapter outlined a sixteenth-century crisis of representation in romance; this chapter will begin to show how the genre also provided the resources for reimagining the world beyond that crisis. I will trace this process through three of Shakespeare's plays, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and *The Tempest*, which between them attempt to rethink the question of human belonging through successive rewritings of one of the central narratives of medieval romance, the story of exogamous desire.²

Perhaps the most forgotten aspect of *The Tempest* is the reason Alonso and his entourage came to the nameless island where Prospero and Miranda, Ariel and Caliban have been living for so many years. Alonso and company are on their way back to Naples from Tunis, where they were celebrating—if that is the right word—"the marriage of the King's fair daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis."³ It is a marriage universally deplored. "Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their queen," Adrian asserts, and Antonio confirms that she is "the rarest that e'er came there" (2.1.73–74; 97). "You may thank yourself for this great loss," Sebastian unhelpfully points out to Alonso, "That would not bless our Europe with your daughter, / But rather lose her to an African" (121–23). We are never told why Alonso married his daughter to an African, but are invited to regret that decision and all of its apparent consequences. "Would I had never / Married my daughter there," Alonso laments, "for coming thence / My son is lost, and, in my rate, she too" (105–07).

For Alonso and Sebastian, the shipwreck appears to be a punishment for Claribel's marriage to an African king. We know, of course, that events have in fact been engineered by Prospero as a punishment for Antonio's usurpation of Milan with Alonso's collusion, and that the king's lost son will be restored to him through a marriage that will also restore Miranda and her father to Italy. In the unfolding of that story of exile and return, we are allowed to forget Claribel and her husband. This process of forgetting is in a sense completed by the play's subsequent history. In the Restoration revision by Dryden and Davenant, Claribel and the king of Tunis are actually removed from the plot: Alonso and Antonio are shipwrecked on their way from a crusade against the Moors, not from a wedding in Tunis.⁴ In this reading, Claribel is not just irrelevant to the real concerns of the play: she is an embarrassment, and she must be forgotten so that we can focus on a purely European drama of conflict and reconciliation. *The Tempest's* emphasis on the insuperable distance of Tunis from Naples—according to Antonio, Claribel “dwells / Ten leagues beyond man's life” (2.1.244–45)—perhaps invites just this act of forgetting, this pretence that whatever is in Africa is forever lost to “our Europe.”

Remembering Claribel's marriage invites us to a reading of *The Tempest* that opens up the global politics of Shakespearean romance and evokes a perspective through which we can see this play as part of a sustained engagement with romance throughout Shakespeare's career. Although published as the first of the comedies in the 1623 Folio, *The Tempest* has since the nineteenth century been called a romance, for the unlikely accidents of its plot, for its emphasis on magic and the marvelous, and above all for the way its narrative moves toward a reconciliation in which losses are restored and old wounds healed: in this reading, Shakespearean romance is a literary form that seeks to redeem the trauma, violence, and arbitrariness of human life by a kind of sympathetic magic.⁵ Most historicist readings, especially those attuned to the questions raised by postcolonial theory, remain skeptical about any such account of the play: for such readings, talk about romance seems like a mystification.⁶ But while I have no interest in recuperating an older, “magical” reading of Shakespearean romance, I do want to argue that historicism loses something important by dispensing altogether with romance, and that it is impossible to fully historicize the play without thinking about romance. Through Shakespeare's rewritings of the romance of exogamy we can trace a transformation of early modern identities that marks the early seventeenth century as a crucial turning point in the history of England's global imagination, uncovering evidence of ideological struggles that

do not become visible if we restrict our reading to the play's direct engagement with colonial discourses.

Medieval literature had long used stories of exogamous desire to fantasize an erotic and material incorporation of the "Saracen" world, above all in the narrative of the Saracen princess whose love for a Christian knight leads her to abandon and betray her father and her people.⁷ As crusade came to seem less and less plausible a fiction, the work of conquest was translated into another register, resolving the experience of defeat into an erotic fiction. But late medieval and early modern fictions of exogamous desire also register an increasing unease or uncertainty about such fantasies, through a striking act of narrative transposition: in place of a Saracen princess, the later texts tell the story of a Christian woman exiled in a Saracen country, who becomes the object of a sultan's attention. This woman, offered on the one hand as an image of isolation and vulnerability, nevertheless becomes, at least for a moment, the means of conversion not only of the sultan but also of his whole kingdom. As Geraldine Heng has argued, the exiled Constance is imagined as both vulnerable to the Saracens and as miraculously able to transform that vulnerability into a different kind of power, a sexualized attraction that overrides the sultan's political and military strength. In this sense, the "Constance romances" continue the project of earlier romance narratives, translating military weakness into an erotic power that figures the missionary ambitions of Christendom at a post-crusade moment. And yet, at the same time, these romances also show the limits of that imaginative translation: in them, the conversionary project fails in the face of the intransigent and increasingly racialized antagonism of the Saracens—only to be replayed, successfully, in England, where race, it seems, poses no obstacle.⁸ Medieval exogamous romance thus inaugurates a complex thinking about identity in which emergent conceptions of race struggle against the assimilative fantasies of Christendom.

Shakespeare would have had access to such exogamous romances through a variety of avenues: the most familiar version of Constance's story appears in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*, and in *Bevis of Hampton*—in which Shakespeare also found Oberon—the eponymous hero marries the daughter of a Saracen king.⁹ But in the sixteenth century, the most spectacular example of romance exogamy was perhaps Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which, like the Constance stories, centers crucially on the love of a Christian woman and a Saracen knight. Ariosto's poem concludes with the union of Ruggiero and Bradamante, Saracen and Christian, a marriage that fantasizes the establishment of the Este dynasty in a spectacular transfer of chivalric power from east to west and solves the

problem of the “Constance” figure’s vulnerability by transforming her into an armed warrior. And yet the narrative also acknowledges Christian weakness: victory over the Saracens is only achieved through the figure of the convert, the enemy who has changed sides. It is an equivocal, troubled vision of Christian contacts with Islam, one clearly appropriate for a sixteenth-century moment of Christian religious war and growing Ottoman power.

When Shakespeare takes up the romance of exogamy, he always turns to Ariosto’s version of that story, the romance of the converted Saracen hero. But each time he invokes romance exogamy, he fractures that narrative, deforms it into tragedy, as in *Othello*, or half suppresses it, as in *The Tempest*. Across his dramatic career, we can read a series of progressively transformed or occluded versions of the romance of love and difference. The story of Claribel—buried, unarticulated, forgotten—is the last of a series of Shakespearean stories that explores the narrative of exogamy, testing its power, exposing its limits, and finally rejecting it in favor of other ways of narrating global identities and cross-cultural contacts.

The marriage of Claribel to the king of Tunis is the end of this story, the last and most attenuated Shakespearean version of romance exogamy; the story begins some fifteen years earlier, in two plays set in a Mediterranean city notorious as a cosmopolitan commercial center and as Europe’s gateway to the east.¹⁰ The Venice of *The Merchant of Venice* is a cosmopolitan site that, to maintain its economic internationalism, has legislated protections for foreigners: as Antonio points out, “the trade and profit of the city / Consisteth of all nations.”¹¹ Dependent for its well-being on the strangers in its midst, this city is the site of two intertwined plots of intercultural marriage, potential or realized. The story that most clearly echoes the narrative of exogamous romance is that of Jessica and Lorenzo, in which Jessica shows herself “a gentle, and no Jew” by eloping with a Christian and running off with her father’s wealth (2.6.51). This act of expropriation is legalized by the arrangements with which the fourth act concludes: Antonio will keep half of Shylock’s money “in use” until Shylock dies, when it will become Jessica and Lorenzo’s; Shylock will keep the other half, but on his death all of his wealth will go to Jessica and her husband (4.1.377–86). If the play rescues Bassanio from a spendthrift’s poverty, it also guarantees that Shylock’s wealth will enrich a daughter who has abandoned him and his religion.¹² This plot conveys the same mixture of exultation and cruelty with which medieval romance narrates the Saracen princess’s betrayal of her father. Not only is Shylock’s wealth

taken for Christian purposes, but Jessica and Lorenzo also show a cruel lack of regard for what the past has left him: Tubal reports to Shylock that Jessica has pawned his ring for a monkey, and Shylock responds, “thou torturest me Tubal,—it was my turquoise, I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor” (3.1.110–11). The communalist drive of romance is opened for a moment to the antithetical perspective of the dispossessed “stranger.”

Jessica’s story parallels exogamous romance also in its repeated suggestion that she was already “gentle” before her conversion, that she is “daughter to [Shylock’s] blood” but “not to his manners” (2.3.18–19). This is given a racial coding when Salerino, in response to Shylock’s insistence that “my daughter is my flesh and blood,” counters that “there is more difference between thy flesh and hers, than between jet and ivory” (3.1.33–35). As in exogamous romance, the marriage of Christian and “infidel” can take place because the infidel is proleptically deracialized, made somatically part of a white, Christian community.¹³ But here, too, we are invited to ask awkward questions. Launcelot—who, if that is his name, at once evokes and parodies a chivalric world—jokes that Jessica’s only hope of salvation is “a kind of bastard hope,” that is, the hope that she is not, in fact, Shylock’s daughter. Launcelot slyly reinstates a racialized understanding that calls into question Jessica’s hope that she will be “sav’d” by her husband, who has “made me a Christian” (3.5.7, 17–18). A few lines later, Lorenzo accuses Launcelot of a still more radical act of racial adulteration: “the Moor is with child by you Launcelot” (35–36). For a brief moment, this storyline evokes a vertiginous sense of how sexuality compromises racialized identities, quietly questioning the fantasy of incorporation to which Jessica and Lorenzo are committed.¹⁴ In *Merchant*, as already in some medieval romances, the question of race interrupts the narrative of exogamy.

Jessica’s story appears alongside another version of exogamous romance that raises still more questions about what it means to have liaisons with strangers and Moors. From the beginning, Portia’s story is presented as a scene of competition that parallels Venetian commerce. Her father’s will has left her without the chance of exercising any will of her own, in finding a husband: she must accept the man who correctly chooses, between three caskets of gold, silver, and lead, the one that contains a picture of her. This test has drawn suitors from distant places, as Portia and Nerissa reveal when they rattle satirically through a list of characters including “the Neapolitan prince,” “the French lord,” “the young baron of England,” “the Scottish lord,” and “the young German” (1.2.38, 52, 63–64, 74, 80). The list almost

confirms Bassanio's claim that "the four winds blow in from every coast / Renowned suitors" (1.1.168–69).

The first suitor actually to appear in the play is the prince of Morocco, a "*tawny Moor all in white*" whose account of himself opens up an even wider world than that imagined by Portia and Nerissa when he swears "by this scimitar / That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince / That won three fields of Sultan Solyman" (2.1.246). Morocco's chivalric idiom, so out of place in Shakespeare's Belmont, derives from a dizzying array of prior texts. Most immediately, it is borrowed from the Turkish knight Brusor in Thomas Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*; underlying Kyd's play is a chivalric narrative by Henry Wotton, following a French source that derives from Fontaine's Latin history of the siege of Rhodes.¹⁵ Chivalric fiction takes up and transforms the memory of the loss of Rhodes in 1522, turning military defeat into the matter of cultural fantasy.

The internationalism of this literary genealogy is outmatched by the international sweep of Kyd's narrative itself. Brusor's boast is spoken at a joust held to celebrate the wedding of the princess of Rhodes to the prince of Cyprus. English, French, Spanish, Turkish, and Rhodian knights participate, "braue knights of Christendome, and Turkish both" (1.3.1). For all of the chivalric internationalism of this scene, however, the tragedy that ensues demonstrates that an aristocratic honor culture cannot incorporate Turkish knights. The play dramatizes the "loue" between Soliman and Erastus, the latter self-exiled from Rhodes after his victory in the tournament (4.1.31). On his arrival in Constantinople—where he has been led by rumors of Soliman's "heroyicall and kingly virtues" (2.1.267)—Erastus is immediately made captain of the Janissaries: his eyes, we are told, "bewitched *Solyman*" (3.1.97; 3.6.6). But the play goes on to show the violence that follows from any such intimacy with Turks. Erastus's beloved Perseda is captured when Brusor leads an Ottoman army against Rhodes; brought to Constantinople, she is reunited with Erastus, but in the same moment also becomes the object of Soliman's desire. Brusor, envious that Erastus is appointed governor of Rhodes, convinces Soliman to have him executed for treason, so that Soliman can pursue Perseda without impediment.

Despite the play's title, it is Erastus who is really seduced by Soliman: he dies proclaiming that no one could be "more louing" than he has been to "*gratious Soliman*" (5.2.29–30). Perseda, on the other hand, announces a rupture between Rhodes and Constantinople. "*Solimans* thoughts and mine resemble / Lines parallel that neuer can be ioyned," she declares in response to his overtures, and she

compactly reads the news of his betrayal of Erastus as an indictment of all Islam: "Accursed *Soliman*, prophane Alcaron" (4.1.107–08; 5.3.38). It is Perseda who leads a desperate defense of the island, and who learns, beyond Erastus's commitment to knightly service, the limits of chivalry. Soliman's violent intrusion into the love of these two children of Rhodes signals his radical exteriority, despite the eroticized, lordly intimacy he fosters with Erastus, and despite his protests against those who "account our Turkish race but barbarous" (3.1.60). Kyd's play dramatizes the limits of romance's assimilative drive.

Morocco's arrival at Belmont quietly signals a real threat, and displaces into the eroticized terms of romance a set of questions about England's new global intimacies. Like Brusor in Rhodes, Morocco has come to Belmont to participate in an international contest; in fact, he describes a wider pursuit of Portia than Portia herself has acknowledged. "All the world desires her," he announces:

From the four corners of the earth they come
To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint.
The Hyrcanian deserts, and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia.
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spets in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits. (2.7.38–46)

Even as the lyrical idealization of Portia evokes romance, the geographical references suggest the play's context of global trade, established from Salerio's reference in the opening lines to thoughts that toss on the ocean like ships under sail (1.1.8–9). But in Morocco's speech, the routes of that trade have been highjacked for a new purpose: both land and sea are bringing not goods for consumption but rivals and "foreign spirits." The plot of the caskets imagines an economy parallel to but opposite from the one that drives Antonio's ships. When Bassanio first describes Portia, he calls her "a lady richly left" whose "sunny locks / Hang on her temples like a golden fleece, / Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond, / And many Jasons come in quest of her" (1.1.161, 169–72). Gratiano later conveys the news of Bassanio's good choice by exclaiming, "We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece" (3.2.240). The golden fleece was a common trope for exploration, merchant "ventures," and privateering, what Theodore Leinwand calls "the romance of risk."¹⁶ Here, the story suggests an inverted economy, one that opens Europe to foreign exploration and desire, and thereby suggests an anxiety about romanticized figurations of global commerce.

This threat can be registered in the geographical conflation Bassanio suggests: Belmont becomes “Colchos’ strond,” that is, Colchis, the eastern shore of the Black Sea. From there Jason brought to Greece both the golden fleece and Medea, the “diuelyshe despret dame” who helped him defraud her father by stealing the fleece, and later murdered their sons before Jason’s eyes when he abandoned her.¹⁷ For readers of Seneca, Colchis was associated with a violence understood as a punishment for imperial daring.¹⁸ The second chorus of Seneca’s play envisions a world in which the sea no longer divides lands but leaves them vulnerable to each other: “time shall in fine out breake / When Ocean waue shall open euery Realme. / The wandring World at will shall open lye.”¹⁹ Medea’s violence is a retribution for the boldness of the first navigators, and is accomplished through the same means that lured Jason to Colchis: she poisons or enchants a golden necklace so that “The secret fyer beares their eyes with glosse of yeallow golde.”²⁰ Gold becomes the means of punishing the one who has set foot on “saluage soyle” in order “To cloyne away the forren golde with greedy snatching hand.”²¹

To imagine Portia as the golden fleece hints at a dangerous opening of the world, in which the sea ceases to mark borders and begins instead to enable new forms of contact. It also hints at a sexualized vulnerability, since Portia’s inability to choose leaves her vulnerable to the desire of undesirable suitors: “Let all of his complexion choose me so,” as she says of Morocco when his back is turned (2.7.79). If the plot glances at forms of global commerce, it also suggests that commerce enables cross-cultural encounters that risk adulterating identity. For a propagandist like Richard Hakluyt, trade and exploration are a heroic labor: his painstaking research assembles what he seems to understand as the fragments of a romance of the English nation, in which both Mandeville and Arthur find a place.²² But the casket plot of *The Merchant of Venice* reverses the direction and the gendering of travel: Europe is made vulnerable to its own fantasies of erotic appropriation, as Portia is vulnerable to Morocco’s desire.

In the casket plot, the competition between Morocco, Bassanio, and Aragon both evokes a global scene of rivalry and hints at the awkward intimacies such rivalry encourages. The choice of the caskets distinguishes Bassanio from his competitors and marks the particular distinctions—even in error—among all three rivals; but at the same time it hints at resemblances between them, reminding us that the competitive relation by its nature suggests imitation, exchangeability, equivalence.²³

The prince of Morocco enters asking Portia not to reject him for the color of his skin: “Mislike me not for my complexion” (2.1.1).

This “*tawny Moor*,” from his first appearance marked as different from the inhabitants of Belmont, proclaims outward difference insignificant. Portia seems to assent to this. “I am not solely led,” she tells him, “By nice direction of a maiden’s eyes,” and she goes on to assert that, even had her father not established the lottery that guides her choice of a husband, she would not have refused Morocco: “Yourself, renowned Prince, then stood as fair / As any comer I have looked on yet” (2.1.13–14, 20–21). Her phrasing equivocates between standing a fair chance and being “fair”—that is, both “beautiful” and “white.”²⁴ The terms of Portia’s refusal to refuse Morocco for his race, in other words, reinscribe a racist hierarchy of values. By the end of the act Portia has abandoned any claim to being evenhanded: “Let all of his complexion choose me so.” And yet the lottery leaves her with no choice but to accept this suitor, if he chooses well. In this sense, at least, her father’s will—like Venetian law—embodies the possibility of a certain cosmopolitanism.

In the rest of the casket plot, Morocco’s racial difference is offset by the play’s recognition of differences dividing the Christian world. The second suitor we encounter is the prince of Aragon, who resists the seduction of golden beauty, choosing instead the silver casket with its legend, “Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves” (2.9.36). This, Aragon confidently assumes, speaks to him, both for his birth and for his recognition of his own worth: “I will not jump with common spirits, / And rank me with the barbarous multitudes” (2.9.32–33). The barbarity Aragon despises is imagined in terms of class or status. But the word also glances toward Morocco: even as Aragon seeks to distinguish himself from barbarity in his desire for pure blood, the plot of the caskets suggests his secret affinity with the “barbarian” who joins him in his bad choice.

In the years after the Spanish Armada, English polemicists repeatedly linked Spain to its Moorish history. William Rowley’s *All’s Lost by Lust* dramatizes the story of Roderigo, the king who rapes Jacintha, the daughter of his most powerful general, and thus drives that general to ally himself with the Moorish king Mulymumen. When Mulymumen arrives in Spain and sees Jacintha, he pursues her as violently as Roderigo did. She refuses him—“O my second hell, / A Christians armes embrace an infidell!” (G4r–v)—but the play shows us precisely what she fears, Christians embracing infidels: not only does Julianus aid Mulymumen, but Margaretta conspires with her Moorish servant Fydella to murder her straying husband. From the opening scene, Rowley emphasizes the otherness of the Moors—they are “barbarous and tawney Affricans,” “Sooty as the inhabitants of

hell" (A4v)—and yet the ponderous irony is that Spaniards and Moors are constantly in one another's arms, in the violence of a shared desire. The result of this history, according to English polemicists, was a racially hybrid Spain. The pamphleteer Thomas Scott imagined a Spanish courtier admitting that "many of us are discended of the Moorish race: wherefore we are termed . . . *Moros Blancos*."²⁵ Edward Daunce attempted an analysis of the ethical qualities the Spanish have inherited from their ethnic mingledness:

The naturall *Spaniard*, being as a simple, is of a confuse and beastly concept, of diet miserable and furious, nourished to increase those humours in scarsitie: but mixed with the *Gothes* and *Vandals*, giuen to theeuery and drunkennes: mingled with the *Mores* cruell and full of trecherie: and consequently, tasting of euerie one, a spring of all filthinesse.²⁶

Spenser similarly asserted that the Moorish invasions left a mongrel Spain, despite the *Reconquista*: "thorogh the marriages which they had made and mixture with the people of the lande duringe theire longe Continvance theare," he writes, the Moors "lefte no pure dropp of Spannishe blodd no nor of Romaine nor Scithian."²⁷

Shakespeare's Aragon laments the mixing of blood:

O that estates, degrees, and offices,
 Were not deriv'd corruptly, and that clear honour
 Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!—
 How many then should cover that stand bare!
 How many be commanded that command!
 How much low peasantry would then be gleaned
 From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
 Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times! (2.9.41–48)

Aragon imagines a moment when status and birth matched perfectly, a moment before corruption mingled "true seed" with chaff. Although the terms of this lament concern class, Aragon's nostalgia for an originary purity of blood also evokes the Spanish doctrine of *limpieza de sangre*, the laws for the purity of blood that drew careful distinctions not only between Jews, Moors, and Christians but also between "New" and "Old" Christians, that is, between converts and those supposedly born into ancient Christian families.²⁸ This is a claim to purity that Spenser was at pains to disprove: "of all nacions vnder heaven," his Ireneus says, "I suppose the Spaniarde is the moste mingled most vncertaine and moste bastardlie" (91). In Shakespeare's

play, the Spanish claim to purity of blood underwrites Aragon's erroneous choice, and thereby establishes his connection with the "barbarian" who came to Belmont before him.

But the casket plot also invites us to another, more ambivalent reading of global identities. In the opening acts of the play, Bassanio is caught up in the errors he ostensibly repudiates, mimicking both his Moroccan and Spanish rivals. He first describes Portia to Antonio as "a lady richly left" (1.1.161), and he presents the marriage only as a means—and as his only means—of escaping his debts: "I have disabled mine estate," he acknowledges, "By something showing a more swelling port / Than my faint means would grant continuance" (1.1.123–25). Seeking to supply his losses from Portia's coffers, he borrows still more money from Antonio: Bassanio needs Antonio's 3,000 ducats in order to "hold a rival place" in Belmont, that is, once again to show a "swelling port" incommensurate with his means (1.1.74). He uses Antonio's gold to pass off a glittering outside for the substance he lacks, and in so doing he comes close to that obsession with gold expressed metaphorically by Morocco and literally by Shylock.

At the same time, Bassanio veers close to Aragon's confidence in pure blood. As a decayed gentleman, he is himself in danger of becoming another sad story of status incommensurate with means. But he does not think himself impaired by his profligacy, since, like Aragon, he knows he carries his true worth in his veins: "I freely told you all the wealth I had / Ran in my veins—I was a gentleman" (3.2.253–54). On the one hand, Bassanio acknowledges his poverty, and therefore the false impression he worked to produce on his first arrival. On the other hand, he also reveals his confidence in the value of his blood. For Shylock, blood is the stuff of a common humanity; for Aragon and Bassanio, blood separates. It is the bearer of class value and it makes Bassanio a fit match for Portia, even though he has nothing, and even though his insistence on carrying himself as if he did has put Antonio's life in danger.

Even as the casket plot marks the differences between Bassanio, Aragon, and Morocco, it also hints at resemblances between them, thereby suggesting an anxiety about the cultural effects of England's pursuit of trade and empire. England's expansionist impulses led it both to rival and to imitate Spain. At the same time, England's conflict with Spain drew it into an increasingly intimate relationship with the Islamic world. Formal political contacts with the Ottoman Empire began in 1578, when William Harborne traveled to Istanbul to conduct negotiations for the first Anglo-Ottoman commercial treaty. Political

observers, however, feared a more secret intention. "You will see," the imperial ambassador Joachim von Sinzendorff wrote to Rudolf II, "to what degree the state and condition of dear Christendom has reached, its name divided," when Christian monarchs "curry favour with this bloodhound," establishing military alliances with the Ottoman sultan.²⁹ Harborne and his successor Edward Barton did in fact negotiate for an Anglo-Ottoman military alliance against Spain.³⁰ In a letter to Murad III of November 9, 1587, Harborne claims "four years ago" to have received the promise of an Ottoman fleet for England's Spanish war.³¹ In 1591, Barton was apparently inciting a Turkish invasion of Italy, promising that great victories could be won on behalf of "the faith": "all idolaters," he wrote, "will be undone."³²

These phrases make it clear that the pursuit of an Ottoman alliance required a new political and religious rhetoric. Anglo-Ottoman diplomacy fixes on a shared Protestant and Muslim iconoclasm as the justification for military collusion. This was a strategy perhaps inaugurated by Murad III in a letter sent to Elizabeth in 1574: "you have banished the idols and portraits and 'bells' from churches, and declared your faith by stating that God Almighty is One and Holy Jesus is His Prophet and Servant, and now, with heart and soul, are seeking and desirous of the true faith."³³ In her first letter to Murad, Elizabeth named herself "the most invincible and most mightie defender of the Christian faith against all kinde of idolatries, of all that live among the Christians, and falselie professe the name of Christ."³⁴ Iconoclasm underwrote an alliance that for both sides meant collusion with unbelievers.

Commercial contact with both the Ottoman Empire and Morocco turned to military alliance, during the war with Spain. In part, this was because in the early modern period even ordinary commercial contacts had a military aspect. "The merchant-shipowners of the trades to Morocco and beyond," K.R. Andrews writes, "were especially well placed to practise the most profitable form of privateering, . . . combining trade and plunder in the same voyage."³⁵ The Levant and Moroccan trades were still more directly connected to war, since English trade with the Ottoman Empire and Morocco included materials for the manufacture of munitions. In 1579 Bernardino de Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in London, reported that English merchants were sending tin for casting cannons to Turkey, claiming that five ships carrying 20,000 crowns worth of tin were at that moment ready to sail.³⁶ On May 17, 1580, the French ambassador in Istanbul wrote that Harborne had "brought in a large amount of steel and bits of broken images of brass and latten to cast ordnance, and promises to bring in a great deal more of it secretly in future," condemning this as "a form of

contraband hateful and pernicious to all Christendom.”³⁷ “All of these items,” S.R. Skilliter writes, “were ‘prohibited goods,’ that is, goods which could be used as war-material by an enemy” (23). But the Ottoman Empire was not England’s enemy, and the papal law to which Skilliter refers could have little force there. English merchants seem to have flaunted their violation of papal edict. The French ambassador writes that Harborne’s cargo included “bits of broken images”; according to Skilliter, English ships “would carry to the infidel the scrap-metal resulting from the upheavals of the Reformation—lead from the roofs of ecclesiastical buildings, old bells, and broken metal statuary” (23). England was shipping the relics of its Catholic past to make cannons for Turkish armies, in a trade that literalized the iconoclastic rhetoric of Elizabethan diplomacy.

The establishment of trade with Morocco was a vital step in opening the Mediterranean to English ships. It also seems to have been part of an anti-Spanish strategy. The English—led in part by Leicester—were trading munitions with Morocco through the 1570s.³⁸ By the late 1570s, there are signs that Elizabeth was involved in secret negotiations with Morocco. In the description of his 1577 embassy, Edmund Hogan reports both the friendship with which he was received by Sultan ‘Abd al-Malik—“I minde to accept of you as my companion and one of my house”—and the sultan’s animosity toward Philip II: “I neither like of him nor of his religion.”³⁹ Hogan also hints that more was transacted than he has recorded: “touching the priuate affaires intreated vpon betwixt her Maiestie and the Emperour,” he writes, “I had letters from him to satisfie her highnesse therein” (3F4r). We are not told what these “priuate affaires” could be, but within a few years Elizabeth and the sultan were corresponding about possible Moroccan support for the Portuguese pretender and even for a joint invasion of Spain.⁴⁰

The agenda implicit in Hogan’s account of his embassy dovetails with Hakluyt’s vision of the relationship between commercial expansion and war against Spain. The play of rivalry between England and Spain in Hakluyt—triangulated through the relationship with Islam—provides a model for reading the play of rivalry and imitation in *The Merchant of Venice*. In trade and in war, Hakluyt imagines an England seeking to challenge Spain’s global preeminence, and condemns those who pull back from an expansionist policy by suggesting that they harbor a secret complicity with Spanishness: while he acknowledges that some “take exception against this our new trade with Turkes and misbeleeuers,” he blames this error of judgment either on an ignorance of history or on “partialitie, or some worse humour.”⁴¹ This unnamed partiality, presumably, is a secret sympathy with Spain or Rome. It is

certainly true that those who proclaimed such partialities loved to dwell on Protestant England's new intimacy with Turks and Moors: "yf we looke what new confederates they haue chosen," the Catholic polemicist Richard Verstegan writes, "we shall see them to be the great *Turk*, the kinges of *Fesse*, *Marocco*, and *Algiers*, or other *Mahometaines* and *Moores* of *Barbarie*."⁴²

As commercial and imperial expansion sets England against Spain, Spanish exploration and colonization also provide a model for England. This doubleness is apparent in Hakluyt's 1598 dedication to Charles Howard, which both memorializes his achievement as lord high admiral in the "glorious, triumphant, and thrise-happy victory" over the Spanish Armada and also proposes the establishment of a lectureship on navigation, "in imitation of *Spaine*."⁴³ Spain is both enemy and model; the Muslim world is both infidel and ally. Commerce and colonization, for Hakluyt, appear as different manifestations of an aggressive foreign policy. In promoting this vision, however, Hakluyt confronts an anxiety about English expansion, one that he projects onto Spanish sympathizers, but that is really the necessary correlative of expansionism itself: the anxiety that in pursuing new global relations, the English were making themselves complicit with forms of religious and racial otherness.

Such anxieties could be expressed in terms of gender, imagining a feminized England whose consuming desires leave it vulnerable to "foreign spirits."⁴⁴ Visiting Zante, William Lithgow noted the tremendous income the island generated from its export of currants, a "female Traffike" wholly maintained, he asserts, by the bad taste of English consumers: Lithgow genders the desire for currants, marking as female all excessive, misplaced consumption.⁴⁵ Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* similarly imagines an Italian merchant sent to Turkey by Lady Lucar to sell "all kind of graine," as well as "lether, tallow, beefe, bacon, bell mettell," importing in return "Bugles to make bables, coloured bones, glasse beades to make bracelettes withall: / For euery day Gentlewomen of England doe aske for such trifles."⁴⁶ Female desire drives consumption, emptying England of "good commodities" in return for "new toyes" sought "in Barbary or in Turkie" (C4r). Hakluyt's masculinized version of economic expansion has its flip side in the possibility that unruly female consumption rather than male desire drives commerce.

These associations between commerce, cosmopolitanism, and sexuality were enabled by the associative richness of the language of trade. Virtually all of the words for trade—traffic, commerce, commodity—doubled as words for the pursuit of sex, the act of sex,

or the female genitalia. The ambiguously erotic and economic language of “commerce” also signified human sociability, conceived in the broadest possible terms as “conversation,” “intercourse”: to have “commerce” was to speak, to exchange, or to have sex, inaugurating a vertiginous relationship that slides rapidly from the most distant and utilitarian contact to an erotic intimacy. The commercial expansion advocated by Hakluyt therefore poses the question of affiliation in an urgent form: “commerce” with the other necessarily raises questions of identity, questions about complicity and dependence, questions about what forms of contact are in fact permitted with that other.

The Merchant of Venice addresses such questions through the fictions of exogamous romance. The stories of both Portia and Jessica evoke the romance of exogamy, the narrative through which romance seeks imaginatively and ideologically to encompass the world. But in both plots, the play also resists romance exogamy, crystallizing a set of anxieties about the contradictions of identity at a moment when the English were imagining a new global presence for themselves. In *Merchant*, romance is split between the universalist aspirations of Christendom and a more anxious sense of England’s liaisons with the world; in *Othello*, romance veers toward the traumatic impasse of tragedy, a generic shift that evokes a wider shift in the ways in which transnational identities were thought and narrated.

Othello—like Morocco—speaks in an idiom borrowed from medieval romance:

of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven
It was my hint to speak—such was my process—
And of the cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.⁴⁷

Othello describes strange landscapes and monstrous races right out of Mandeville, and—also like Mandeville—the response he invites is wonder: “She swore in faith ’twas strange, ’twas passing strange, / ’Twas pitiful, ’twas wondrous pitiful” (1.3.161–62). “Wonder” was an important category in Renaissance aesthetics, both a general term for the indefinable something that distinguishes poetry from other uses of language and the specific term for the compelling power of romance.⁴⁸ In describing Desdemona’s response to his stories, Othello marks those stories generically.

The description of this scene of storytelling is Othello's response to the charge that he has bewitched Desdemona: "thou hast enchanted her," Brabantio rages, "practised on her with foul charms," or with "drugs or minerals," or other "arts inhibited and out of warrant" (1.2.63; 73–74; 79). Othello's narrative is offered as a refutation of this charge, but even as he repudiates the idea that he has charmed this "maiden never bold," he notoriously invites the recognition that he has in fact been charming, in another sense (1.3.95). "I will a round unvarnished tale deliver," he promises,

Of my whole course of love, what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration and what mighty magic—
For such proceeding I am charged withal—
I won his daughter. (1.3.91–95)

"This only is the witchcraft I have used," he insists at the end of his unvarnished tale, at once invoking and rejecting enchantment, and playing on the multiple senses of the word "charm": Desdemona has not been charmed by potions or spells but she has undoubtedly been charmed by his strange stories, whose capacity to elicit wonder itself represents a kind of enchantment, a displaced, metaphorical, literary magic.

If the marriage of a Moor and a Christian is a story out of romance, that marriage is produced and secured through repeated acts of romance narration.⁴⁹ It is romance that makes sense of what it is for Othello to be "the Moor of Venice" and not, as Roderigo calls him, "an extravagant and wheeling stranger / Of here and everywhere," or, in Iago's words, "an erring Barbarian" (1.1.134–35; 1.3.356). As a Moorish convert who has married a Christian woman, Othello arrives in Venice as a figure right out of romance, an analogue or perhaps even a literary descendant of Otuel, the converted Moor who marries Charlemagne's daughter in various Middle English romances.⁵⁰ Romance gives Othello a place in Venice, and romance wonder—the aesthetic and affective pull that first draws Desdemona to him—forestalls Brabantio's question: how could someone who "shunned / The wealthy, curled darlings of our nation" now "Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom / Of such a thing as thou?" (1.2.67–71). After Othello has spoken, the duke announces that this story "would win my daughter too" (1.3.172). And yet, even here, the authority of this authorizing fiction does not go unchallenged.

After he has begun to fall under Iago's spell, Othello continues to frame his identity in terms of romance, although in Act Three the

enchantments begin to go bad. When he demands of Desdemona the handkerchief he knows she cannot produce, Othello insists on its magical origins. It was the gift of an "Egyptian," "a charmer" who "could almost read / The thoughts of people (3.4.57–58):

there's magic in the web of it.
A sibyl that had numbered in the world
The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sewed the work;
The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk,
And it was dyed in mummy, which the skilful
Conserved of maidens' hearts. (3.4.71–77)

In Cinthio's narrative, the handkerchief was embroidered *alla moresca*, in the Moorish fashion, a phrase that suggests close trading relations with the Islamic world.⁵¹ Othello describes it as something stranger: in these words, he takes on the legacy of a pagan and feminized east even as the magic of his own past materially alters, changed from the enchantment of romance tales into the sticky residue of mummified bodies. The vehicle for this ancient eastern magic is the fabric of eastern wealth itself, silk, the real magic thread that tied together east and west.

The handkerchief, Othello claims, was woven by a 200-year-old sibyl transported by "prophetic fury." M.R. Ridley glosses this phrase as a wild inspiration verging on incoherence; Frank Kermode interprets it as "divine frenzy," the inspired rage of creation that was Neoplatonism's conception of both art and prophecy.⁵² That may be all there is to it. But Norman Sanders, E.A.J. Honigmann, and Michael Neill all note that Othello's phrase recalls the "furor profetico" of *Orlando Furioso*, 46.80.⁵³ I think this echo is more revealing than has been recognized, and that the placement of this phrase in both Ariosto and Shakespeare suggests a crucial connection between Shakespeare's tragedy and the ideological investments of romance.

Ariosto wrote of "prophetic fury" when describing another labor of embroidery by another ancient prophetess, Cassandra. According to Ariosto, Cassandra embroidered a pavilion for her brother Hector on which she depicted, "In gold and silk, of hues so ravishing," stories of the noblest knight who will be descended from him (46.81). After Hector's death the tent was taken by Menelaus, who gave it to Proteus of Egypt, where it remained until Actium, after which Octavian brought it to Rome. From there it traveled back east with Constantine, until the sorceress Melissa stole it from another Constantine, to be the wedding tent of the Christian Bradamante and her Saracen lover,

Ruggiero, Hector's descendent and the ancestor of Ariosto's patron Ippolito, whose figure Cassandra had sewn into its fabric so many years before. The itinerary of this tent, from Troy to Ferrara, suggests the "translation" of empire from east to west and the retrogressive eastward movement introduced by Constantine when he moved his capitol from Rome to Constantinople—and thus also the threat represented by an Ottoman Empire that claimed to embody Byzantium's legacy.⁵⁴ The theft of the tent from another Constantine rectifies this eastward detour of the *translatio*: Melissa restores the "proper" westward movement of empire and ends the long hiatus of eastern imperial power. The means of this imperial restoration is the Saracen Ruggiero, who converts to become one of the greatest Christian heroes, just as Othello arrives from beyond the confines of Christendom to lead the Venetian armies against the Turks. The silk of Othello's handkerchief, like the silk of Cassandra's pavilion, figures a fantasy resolution of imperial rivalry: the westward movement of these fabrics—like the westward movement of the Saracen or Moorish figures with which they are identified—signals an imaginative effort to appropriate empire, silk, and the magic arts of prophecy themselves from a powerful Islamic world.⁵⁵

But Ariosto's romance also struggles against a narrative that shapes experience in a very different way. Cassandra's prophetic fury introduces tragedy into the poem: "many true and tragic things she said. / Both day and night long hours at work she spent / And with her needle a fair story made."⁵⁶ These true and tragic things concern both the varying fortunes of the tent before the establishment of the Este dynasty and the varying fortunes of the Este themselves, whose troubled history repeatedly intrudes into the poem. Romance gives room to tragic experience, but at the same time it takes shape by opposing itself to tragedy: in Cassandra's prophecy, romance represents the origin and the completion of history, the "fair story" whose happy beginning and happier ending make sense of the tragedies in between.

In Shakespeare, the relations between tragedy and romance are reversed: the silk of Ariosto's romance becomes the trigger for tragic violence, the deceptive "ocular proof" that drives Othello to suspect Desdemona (3.3.363). Beginning with the marriage that should end a romance, the play dramatizes the disintegration of that marriage and of the converted hero. Othello's romance idiom is counterposed by a racist language that marks the failure of romance, in the face of an experience of difference that rereads the exogamous unions of romance as monstrous, bestial, "against all rules of nature" (1.3.102). If romance imagines forms of difference that can be assimilated, Iago imagines irreconcilable differences.

Othello's suicide speech famously announces the impossibility of negotiating the antithetical subject positions of romance: as he stabs himself, he recalls a moment in Aleppo when, seeing a Turk beat a Venetian, he "took by th' throat the circumcised dog / And smote him—thus!" (5.2.353–54). At the beginning of the speech Othello had insisted on his role as the defender of Venice: "I have done the state some service, and they know't" (5.2.337). When he replays the episode at Aleppo, he is at once Venetian and Turk, Christian and Muslim, crusader and infidel.⁵⁷ Romance magic had bridged that difference; but in *Othello*, magic turns out to be a fiction: the story of the handkerchief, told at two different points in two different versions, seems finally to be an invention, a story designed to elicit Desdemona's horror and guilt (3.4.57–58, 5.2.214–15). Ariosto's "prophetic fury" is disenchanted: or, it becomes like language itself, mutable and potentially deceiving. This disenchantment casts a shadow over Othello's earlier stories as well. "This only is the witchcraft I have used," he told the senators: storytelling seems to be the only remaining magic, and even this magic is by the end of the play a diminished thing, powerless to negotiate the divided halves of Othello's identity.

The idea of *Othello* as a comedy gone wrong has long been a staple of criticism. In Susan Snyder's formulation, the play is "post-comic": it begins with a miniature New Comedy, but its further progress reveals comic union as a terrifying paradox, a "destruction of self-sufficiency combined with continued isolation in the self."⁵⁸ For Snyder, this is an insight into what she calls "the problem of integrity compromised by dependence on another," and it allows her to interpret Othello's difference as heightening "the tragic paradox of human love, individuals dependent on each other but unalterably separate and mysterious to each other" (138, 136). Snyder's argument evacuates any real significance from Othello's race, which becomes exclusively the sign of a more universal contradiction. Nevertheless, I want to suggest that the generic process she describes has resonance for a more politically charged reading of the play.

Elizabeth famously conducted her political life according to the codes of chivalric romance, imagining service to the state as knightly service to a lady.⁵⁹ James, in his own way, imagined English political life in affective terms. In his first speech to Parliament, he gave this politics of love a vivid articulation:

shall it euer bee blotted out of my minde, how at my first entrie into this kingdome, the people of all sorts rid and ran, nay rather flew to meet me? their eyes flaming nothing but sparkles of affection, their

mouthes and tongues vttering nothing but sounds of ioy, their hands, feete, and all the rest of their members in their gestures discovering a passionate longing, and earnestnesse to meete and embrace their new Soueraigne. (*Political Works*, p. 269)

For James, such longings circumscribe themselves in a legal, divinely sanctioned arrangement: "What God hath conioyned then, let no man separate. I am the Husband, and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife."⁶⁰ This is more than a marriage of king and country, as the phrase "all the whole Isle" indicates; here, marriage also becomes a metaphor for the union of England and Scotland. Already in his *Basilikon Doron*, James had advised his son to take the union slowly, "vniting and welding" the countries "by all sort of friendship, commerce, and alliance" into "a naturall and inseparable vnitie of love" (51). Love signifies for James both the affective heart of monarchy, the bond between king and subject, and also a power that crosses national borders to produce new forms of felt unity. At the same time, marriage as a political trope opens up the question of marriage as a real practice: in a ramified and peculiarly revealing sentence, James promised a reluctant England "such an Vnion, as if you had got [Scotland] by Conquest, but such a Conquest as may be cemented by loue, the onely sure bond of subiection or friendship." "Vnion," he concluded, lamely, "is a marriage" (292–93).

The union was only one of the issues James tried to resolve through this political love. The speech of 1604 also announced a foreign policy aimed at "amitie" (270). The primary recipient of this new love would be Spain. In August 1603, a Spanish ambassador arrived in England; in May 1604, negotiations began in earnest; and on August 18, less than three months before the first court performance of *Othello*, James signed the Treaty of London, bringing to an end one of the guiding foreign policies of the last twenty years. A few years later, James was actively seeking Spanish matches for his sons, first Henry and then Charles, tense, highly negotiated marriages designed to secure this "amitie." Even his daughter's Protestant marriage formed part of a wider political project designed to draw Protestant and Catholic powers into the same web of dynastic and familial relationships.⁶¹ Elizabeth performed her relations with her male courtiers through the script of knightly service to an impossibly idealized woman. But James's policy depended on the symbolism as well as the substance of marriage.

These marriages, W.B. Patterson has argued, were crucial elements of James's larger hopes for a reunited Christendom.⁶² As he told

Parliament in 1604, "I could wish from my heart, that it would please God to make me one of the members of such a generall Christian vnion in Religion, as laying wilfulnesse aside on both hands, wee might meete in the middest, which is the Center and perfection of all things"—a striking, if not shocking, statement for those committed to the war against Spain as a war against Antichrist.⁶³ Even after the revolt of Bohemia, the event that sparked what would become the Thirty Years' War, James continued to hope for "one mutuall Christendome," in which all Christian kingdoms would be like members of the same body.⁶⁴ Jonson's *Hymenaei* perhaps evokes this Jacobean politics of union in its celebration of an interfaith marriage: the union that "every discord in true music brings," the "fair and gentle strife" so unlike "killing war," suggests not only the union with Scotland but also James's wider dream of a union of Protestants and Catholics.⁶⁵

James's policies, as they depended on the rhetoric of marriage, also circumscribed the proper space of this love. With James's policy of Christian reconciliation came a renewed antagonism toward Islam. James was reproved by his own merchants for the open contempt he showed to envoys from Islamic states. In July 1607, Mustafa, a *chiaus* from Istanbul, arrived in England to deliver the sultan's complaints about the depredations of English pirates in the Mediterranean. For months, James refused to meet with him, ignoring repeated reminders from the Levant Company that English commercial interests were at stake. The king's behavior generated rumors that the *chiaus* was an impostor, so that a few years later the word "*chiaus*" came to denote either the perpetrator or the victim of fraud: "What do you think of me," Dapper demands of Face in *The Alchemist*, "that I am a *chiaus*?"⁶⁶

James announced in a proclamation of February 22, 1604, that he sought for peace "because such a settled amitie might (by an vnion in Religion) be established among Christian Princes, as might enable us all to resist the common Enemie."⁶⁷ But who is the common enemy? In a sermon delivered before the king a few months later, John Burges picked up that phrase to exhort James to a stronger anti-Catholicism.⁶⁸ In *Othello*, the question of the common enemy is up for debate: the Turkish fleet sinks without a shot being fired, but other forms of conflict split the Venetian camp from within. "Are we turned Turks?" Othello demands, when the various rivalries of the play begin to erupt into violence, "and to ourselves do that / Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?" (2.3.166–67). What heaven has forbidden the Ottomites, as Richard Knolles knew, was conflict: the Turks, Knolles wrote, call themselves "*Islami*, that is to say, men of one mind, or at

peace among themselues.” The rise to power of these men of one mind came at the expense of a conflicted Christendom. Instead of exemplifying “Christian compaßion and vnitie,” the Christian nations “haue euer and euen yet at this time are so deuided among themselues with endlesse quarrels . . . that they neuer could as yet . . . ioyne their common forces against the common enemie.” Knolles dedicated his book to James, citing James’s *Lepanto*, a poem celebrating “the greatest and most glorious victorie that euer was by any the confederat Christian princes against these the *Othoman* Kings or Emperours” (A4v–5v; A3r). James’s poem in fact struggles with the question of religious enmity, ending with a reminder that this victory was achieved by an army in the service of Antichrist; the first English edition prefaces the poem with a note excusing the decision “to pen a worke . . . in praise of a forraine Papist bastard.” But the poem begins with God’s acknowledgment that “All Christians serue my sonne, though not / Aright in euerie thing.”⁶⁹

For James and for Knolles, a Turkish “common Enemie” legitimized a policy of rapprochement with a Catholic world that for over twenty years had been England’s most visible common enemy. In *Othello*, we see what happens to such an alliance when the threat that precipitated it disappears: the external Turkish threat reappears as the threat of an inward Islamicization. A number of critics have seen in this turn of the narrative a hint that that the real issue in *Othello* is not Moorish but Spanish difference, pointing to curious traces of Spanishness in Shakespeare’s play.⁷⁰ I do not think this reading adequately addresses the question of difference in *Othello*.⁷¹ But it does suggest the complexity of the play’s moment. The question of difference, in the early seventeenth century, encompassed at once the confessional conflicts within the Christian world and forms of difference beyond that world. The issue for a reading of *Othello* is not to decide which forms of difference the play addresses; it is, rather, to see the play as participating in a wider process whereby the forms of transnational identity were being rethought. The conflict, in *Othello*, between the assimilative erotic fictions of romance and the language of a racism for which such fictions are perverse, monstrous, signals a wider contradiction between different modes of belonging—that is, finally, between the fictions sustaining a medieval notion of Christendom and those helping to shape an emergent sense of Europeanness.

The first years of James’s reign represent an important moment in the history of race.⁷² The year after *Othello* was performed at court, Richard Verstegan published a book that traced the roots of English identity not to the British first inhabitants of the island but rather to

the Anglo-Saxon invaders who displaced them: these, for Verstegan, were the first English people, and the English themselves were part of a common northern European people. Verstegan makes a powerful argument for identifying Englishness with its racial origins, rather than with climate or imperial mythology. But his account of race was also motivated by his religious politics. As a Catholic, he was determined to trace the first English church not to the “primitive” Christianity of the Britons but to the increasingly Roman practices of the Anglo-Saxons. Race, for Verstegan, was a concept capable of intervening into ongoing religious conflicts.⁷³

Verstegan offers an important insight into one of the pressures motivating the genesis of racial discourse. Race enabled a thinking of identity beyond the crisis of the religious wars, a fundamental reconfiguration of identity whose effects should be registered not only in narratives of cross-cultural contact but also in the way England and Europe imagined themselves. Through the genesis of a concept of race, Europe could be imagined as a sociopolitical and cultural space both related to and distinct from Christendom. The fissures that divided Christendom were recouped to the benefit of a Europe whose foundations were laid partly in a general sense of a shared religion, but above all in a sense of racial and cultural affiliation that could absorb and contain sectarian differences, and that transmuted the abstract conceptual space of Christendom into the determinate, territorialized place known as Europe.

In *Othello*, racial discourse grapples uncertainly with other modes of constructing difference, drawn from humoral theory, climatological discourse, and—as I have tried to suggest—medieval romance.⁷⁴ The play’s evocation of a love that cannot overcome difference but leaves Othello and Desdemona, in Susan Snyder’s words, “unalterably separate and mysterious to each other,” suggests through a meditation on genre the changing stakes of global identities in the early modern moment. The failure of romance is intimately linked to the felt demise of a universal Christendom, a space of religious affiliation capable of extending its boundaries to the edges of the earth. That universal vision—imperial in its own way—gives way in the early modern moment to a Europe that institutes a different set of demands on its constituents and produces new relationships both among them and between them and the rest of the world. This is a historical shift that does not take place in the pages of any one text: what *Othello* evokes is rather the traumatic impasse at which romance has arrived. Exogamous romance turns out to be a fantasy whose magic is disappearing. Through the figures of Morocco and Othello, romance even

begins to seem a “Moorish” mode of thought and language: the genre that had narrated the assimilation of Saracens into Christendom itself becomes an alien thing, exotic, seductive, but out of place.

In this context, it is interesting to attend to an eighteenth-century reading of *Othello* that links issues of eroticism, race, and romance, and turns Shakespeare’s play into a mirror for modern Europe. Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third earl of Shaftesbury, elaborates on the dangers of indulging a wayward imagination with strange and grotesque fictions. As Felicity Nussbaum has noticed, Shaftesbury’s emblem for this susceptibility to fiction is Desdemona, entranced by Othello’s stories.⁷⁵ Shakespeare, Shaftesbury writes, has prophetically “hit our taste in giving us a Moorish hero, full-fraught with prodigy, a wondrous storyteller”; quoting Othello’s unvarnished tale, Shaftesbury locates in Desdemona’s attentiveness to it Shakespeare’s anticipation of how

the fair sex of this island should, by other monstrous tales, be so reduced as to turn their favour chiefly on the persons of the tale-tellers, and change their natural inclination for fair, candid, and courteous knights, into a passion for a mysterious race of black enchanters.⁷⁶

Shaftesbury’s particular target is travel narrative, which is “in our present day, what books of chivalry were in those of our forefathers”: “’tis the same taste,” he insists, “which makes us prefer a Turkish history to a Grecian or a Roman, an Ariosto to a Virgil, and a romance or novel to an Iliad” (222).

For Shaftesbury, romance defines that undisciplined, errant, and above all female mode of reading that exemplifies English susceptibility to the barbarous, monstrous, fantastical, or foreign. Through the figure of Othello, romance becomes alien, and the desire to indulge in it the sign of something alien within, an attentive listening that slides all too easily into sexual desire for “a mysterious race of black enchanters”: “A thousand Desdemonas,” Shaftesbury announces, “would frankly resign fathers, relations, countrymen, and country itself, to follow the fortunes of a hero of the black tribe” (225). In these phrases, Shaftesbury reads Shakespeare’s play as Brabantio would, reducing Othello to a magician and even suggesting that Shakespeare punishes Desdemona for her wayward passions (224). Romance is a product of “the black tribe” and the sign of a dangerous effeminizing and racializing of English tastes. Shakespeare’s play provides Shaftesbury with the inverted emblem of what a truly civilized European culture would look like, without Moors, without wayward women, without magic, and without romance.

In Shaftesbury's reading of *Othello* we can see the effect of a century of increasingly racial thought, a century that witnessed both the end of the religious wars on the continent and the routinization of the Atlantic slave trade, a century that saw "Europe" take hold as a political reality sustained by a certain balance of powers and defined by its difference from the space of colonial adventure. But this is a world not wholly alien to Shakespeare, a world whose outlines Shakespeare's plays can in some measure be said to trace, as they dramatize the failure of the romance of exogamy. If Shakespeare can be said to exorcise the impulses of romance exogamy, he clearly remains fascinated by it in ways that are anathema to Shaftesbury: Shakespeare reproduces the erotic energies of romance even as he transforms, suppresses, and undoes its narratives. In the long perspective of literary history, we might describe this as the symptom of a generic repression, the half-suppressed reminder of an older literary fiction in which erotic union was the vehicle for imagining a transformation of the world.

Shakespeare's rewriting of exogamous romance culminates with the story of Claribel in *The Tempest*. That story is so easily forgotten because it seems to have no place in the reconstituted social and political world of Naples and Milan or in the proto-colonial struggles of the play's island setting. But if Dryden and Davenant, in their revision of the play, try to purify it of its African liaisons by abandoning Claribel and the king of Tunis, Shakespeare repeatedly evokes forms of encounter with Africa. Claribel's husband is not the only African in *The Tempest*: Caliban's mother Sycorax was banished from Algiers for—in Prospero's words—"mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible" (1.2.264). The powers of this sorceress double Prospero's own. Like Sycorax, Prospero works his magic by the work of "potent ministers" (2.1.275); "by sorcery he got this isle," Caliban reports, using a word that links the Milanese mage to the African witch (3.2.51). As a foreign enchantress, Sycorax recalls other dangerous women from strange places, like Medea or Circe. But it is Prospero, not Sycorax, who has learned from Medea when he describes the powers he renounces: "I have bedimmed / The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds, / And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault / Set roaring war," he announces, in words borrowed from Ovid's witch; "Graves at my command / Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth."⁷⁷ The difference between her "sorceries terrible" and Prospero's "rough magic" may be little.

The island evokes a space of contact between Europe and Africa where the exercise of power potentially erodes the claim to difference. Tunis and Algiers both embody this mingling. Those two cities were

notorious as centers of “Barbary Coast” piracy, and the open secret about “Barbary” piracy was that the pirates significantly included renegade Europeans. “The most part of the Turkes of Alger,” wrote Nicolas de Nicolai, “are Christians renied, or Mahumetised, of al Nations, . . . giuen all to whoredome, sodometrie, theft, and all other most detestable vices.”⁷⁸ In seventeenth-century accounts, the population of North Africa prominently included English renegades, “*English Turkes*,” called by Thomas Fuller “Turks and no Turks.”⁷⁹ Both Tunis and Algiers were linked to the scandalous seductions of renegadism: both suggested the possibility of an illicit crossing, a space of undecidability. The English pirates operating out of North African ports were, according to John Smith, once privateers stalking Spanish ships in the Atlantic, driven to Africa because James’s policies left no place for them in his England. In “Barbary,” this heterogeneous group, “compiled of *English, French, Dutch, and Moores*,” became “so disjoynted, disordered, debawched, and miserable, that the *Turks* and *Moores* beganne to command them as slaves, and force them to instruct them in their best skill, which many an accursed runnagado, or *Christian* turned *Turke* did.”⁸⁰ Barbary piracy was the other face of English power, and both Algiers and Tunis suggest a troubling liaison between English policy and the “Turks.”⁸¹ James’s politics of Christian reconciliation inadvertently fostered awkward new complicities between England and North Africa.

The Tempest both acknowledges this liaison and fantasizes its undoing, by pairing Claribel’s story with the story of Caliban’s attempted rape of Miranda. In the hybrid space of the Mediterranean island, the problem of identity is figured as a problem of the containment of sexuality. “I have used thee / (Filth as thou art) with humane care,” Prospero thunders at Caliban, “and lodged thee / In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate / The honour of my child” (1.2.346–49). Caliban does not deny the charge, and Miranda responds to him with an anger that led editors for years to attribute her words to her father:

When thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vile race
(Though thou didst learn) had that in’t which good natures
Could not abide to be with. (1.2.356–61)

The savage can never be made civil; his “vile race” prevents it. The word “race,” in the early modern period, primarily signified familial

relationships, not a developed, modern theory of racial groups; and yet, the point here is clearly that Caliban's savagery is born into him, putting him beyond the reach of all civility and all humanity. Prospero and Miranda present the attempted rape as the event that forced them to abandon any civilizing project and to recognize Caliban as unreformable, fit only for bringing firewood. It is a story with a deep resonance in colonial discourse.⁸² But *The Tempest* also asks us to recognize that the failed rape of Miranda replays but transforms the story of Claribel and the king of Tunis. Claribel has been lost to Tunis, but, with her father's help, Miranda will resist the violent advances of an Algerian in order to find her fit match in an Italian prince. The story of the sexual violence of the colonized subject replays the romance of exogamy in a distorted, degraded form: it is as though, in this play, the desire that is at the heart of such romances can only appear as the threat of a violation. In *Othello*, the emergence of a racial discourse is signaled through grotesque, horrified fantasies of perverse couplings; here, it is signaled through a parodic inversion of romance exogamy. In this way, *The Tempest* articulates a shift between a romance economy of difference founded on an erotic fiction to one in which pure identities are maintained through the policing of white female sexuality.⁸³

Stephen Orgel and David Kastan have argued that, through the narrative of political marriage, *The Tempest* addresses the world of European dynastic politics; in Kastan's terms, this perspective on the play offers an alternative to a current critical tendency to read *The Tempest* exclusively in terms of colonial history.⁸⁴ While I think the question of dynastic politics is vital to the play, I also want to suggest that these two contexts are linked, that the play is neither exclusively about the colonial world nor about European high politics but is engaged in constructing the terms of this very distinction. Between them, the marriages of Claribel and Miranda enunciate the changing forms of transnational identity, in the early seventeenth century. As political marriages, both evoke James's policies. *The Tempest* was performed at the wedding of James's daughter Elizabeth to the Elector Palatine in 1612/13, and when it was first performed at court in 1611 James was already negotiating for his son Henry's marriage to either the Infanta of Spain or a Medici princess. These matches, one Protestant, one Catholic, embodied James's effort to forge a set of dynastic relations that would overcome religious differences. In abandoning the anti-Catholic politics of the 1580s and 1590s, James attempted to reassert the unity of Christendom: despite doctrinal differences and imperial rivalries, this was for James the space of proper affiliation, a space within which differences and conflicts might be

resolved. James's hopes for Christendom were frustrated; but his political rhetoric evokes a larger cultural shift in the early seventeenth century, not so much a renewed Christian ecumenicism as an intensified sense of Europe's racial, cultural, and political difference. The policies of this king—"a European in outlook," according to W.B. Patterson (153)—participated in and encouraged an increasing ideological and affective investment in a shared sense of Europeanness, and thereby suggest how an understanding of European identity as rooted in race and culture offered a vital solution to the ongoing crisis of religion.

If Claribel's marriage to the king of Tunis recalls the marriage that in romance establishes a new horizon for Christian identity, in *The Tempest* that marriage is rewritten as a loss recouped only by Miranda's marriage to Ferdinand. The marriage of the heirs of Naples and Milan, like the marriages James tried to sponsor throughout his reign, seeks to resolve conflict and manage difference, but it does so only within a narrowed political and cultural space. The refusal of romance exogamy defines the space of proper belonging, what Sebastian calls "our Europe," a space of felt affiliation that both produces and strongly limits the possibility of political and affective reconciliation. As a quiet reminder of the romance fiction of marriage with a "Saracen," the story of Claribel marks the distance *The Tempest* travels, from a wedding in Africa to the promise of another wedding in Italy: here, exogamy appears as a loss, in the case of Claribel, or as an attempted rape, in the case of Miranda. This refusal of romance exogamy transforms global identities, shifting our attention from the erotic imperialism of romance to the absolute difference of Caliban's "vile race."

This, I want to suggest, is the importance of the return to Italy with which the play concludes. Kastan has argued that *The Tempest* is "much more obviously a play about European dynastic concerns than European colonial activities" (188). If this is so, however, it is so not because the play should be read in one context rather than another but because it is involved in producing the sense that there *are* two separate contexts, a sense of Europe as a space apart and of European politics as a practice absolutely distinct from the forms of dominance exercised in the world beyond Europe. The evocation of dynastic politics is precisely what defines the play as also being about the production of extra-European space, the space of absolute difference, the space in which all rule is tyrannical rule and the magic of Prospero begins to look like the magic of Sycorax. *The Tempest's* rewriting of romance defines the conditions for understanding how the play participates in an early modern colonialism. The final return to Italy does

not mark this as a play uninterested in the dynamics of imperial rule; on the contrary, that flight from the compromised space of the Mediterranean defines the play's participation in the production of new affective and political investments, above all an investment in "our Europe" as a cultural space separate from the rest of the world. In *The Tempest*, this separation, this bill of divorce, manifests itself in a rewriting of romance.

It is interesting in this connection to notice that *The Tempest* contains one of Shakespeare's few references to "Europe," but also that Shakespeare's late plays appeal to this Europe with a certain regularity. Shakespeare uses the word "Europe" ten times, in all of his plays. In the early histories, "Europe" is invoked as the scene of an international chivalric culture, an aggressive cult of masculine honor: thus in *Henry VI Part Three*, Edward laments the death of the duke of York, calling him "The flower of Europe for his chivalry." The later history plays tend to ironize this usage: Falstaff uses the word three times, each time parodying chivalric language, and in *Henry V*, the French Constable uses the word in praising his prince's horse, to similarly ridiculous effect.⁸⁵ The word never appears in either the comedies or the tragedies.

But it is the appearance of the word in Shakespeare's romances that interests me most: here, Europe resurfaces beyond Falstaffian parody, as a term designating a community of evaluation and judgment beyond the nation. In *The Winter's Tale*, Paulina uses the word as she goes to the prison to visit Hermione in Act Two: "No court in Europe is too good for thee." In *Cymbeline*, Imogen uses the word when she commands Pisanio to search for her lost jewel: "'Shrew me, / If I would lose it for a revenue / Of any king's in Europe!"⁸⁶ And in *The Tempest*, Sebastian uses it to deplore the loss of Claribel to the king of Tunis, when she would have graced any court in Europe. In each of these cases, "Europe" signifies a locus of communally recognized value, invoked against injustice or misrecognized worth: an impasse in the life of the nation produces an appeal to a wider community whose judgments are presumed capable of rectifying error.

This shift suggests that the ideological resonances of Europe have expanded, between Shakespeare's first and his last plays, and evokes the changing terms of Shakespeare's understanding of romance. From the narrow space of an aristocratic politics, "Europe" comes to designate a broader space of affiliation and shared judgment. It is this space that *The Tempest* seeks to imagine: it fantasizes Europe as a place divided from the world. But if Europe manifests itself in the play as a community of right judgment, the separateness of that community, its

difference from the rest of the world, is policed by the policing of sexual relations. If Europe exists here as an ethical conception, it exists also as a racial one, whose possibility is guaranteed by the exclusion of Sycorax, Caliban, and Claribel. The history of Shakespeare's uses of the word "Europe" also evokes a wider generic shift, from the aristocratic internationalism of chivalric romance—in which marriage enables dynastic projects of reconciliation and expansion, and conversion figures a cultural assimilation made possible by the restricted class base of the fiction—to a racialized romance that salvages a divided Christendom in the fantasy of a new Europe. Shakespeare's exploration of global identities takes place as a series of appropriations and transformations of romance, a process of generic exploration that fractures and reinvents a literary form in the effort to reimagine the world in terms of new political and affective relations.

CHAPTER 3



UNFINISHED ROMANCE

The previous chapter argued that Shakespeare sought to detach Europe from a hybrid Mediterranean world, offering in the narrative of return that concludes *The Tempest* a fantasy of withdrawal, a divorce from the cultural center of the ancient and medieval world. This ideological work manifests itself in his plays as a transformation of romance: in Shakespeare's successive rewritings of romance I tried to register the complex processes through which an increasingly racialized understanding of identity emerged from within the literary fictions of a troubled Christendom.

This chapter will take up Fulke Greville's more radical critique of romance, a critique, however, that articulates itself as an effort to remain true to the project of romance in a world Greville understood to be abandoning it. The issue that Greville sought to address by addressing romance was what he understood as the increasing autonomy of human politics, the de-theologization of the political. I will approach Greville's tragedy *Mustapha* from the perspective of the theory of genres he articulates in an unpublished text designed to serve as the introduction to his two extant plays, *Mustapha* and *Alaham*; and I will set this tragedy in the context of two developments in political thought in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, first the legal theory of Jean Bodin, and, second, the work of the theorists of international law, Alberico Gentili and Hugo Grotius. These modes of thinking about law and politics helped produce the idea of a sphere of political life separate from questions of faith, in response to violent confessional conflicts and new imperial histories: they sought to produce "religion" and "politics" as distinct arenas of human thought and activity, and, in this, represent crucial theoretical

interventions into the changing forms of human belonging. In their efforts to describe the foundations of the state and the laws governing the interactions of states, Bodin and the international law theorists sought to think human political life beyond the framework of a Christendom in crisis. Their work can be understood as an early effort to offer an account of a political modernity—and, in so doing, to help produce that modernity. It is against this movement in contemporary political thought that we should read Greville's tragedy, and the simultaneously political and literary relationship he articulates between tragedy and the unfinished romance of Elizabethan England.

In the early modern period, romance was often associated with the most dilatory and irresponsible narratives. But at the same time, and particularly in the comments of English authors, romance could be set to work. Sidney called his prose romance an "idle work," emphasizing that it was a product of his leisure to be enjoyed by readers in their own moments of leisure, but Spenser called his poem an educational text whose aim, as he famously wrote in the "Letter to Raleigh," "is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline."¹ In the sixteenth century, romance could be either business or pleasure—or, rather, its pleasures could either be conceived as perfectly aleatory or as insinuating forms of discipline and instruction in the guise of pleasure.

When Sidney called his *Arcadia* an "idle work," he surely did not mean that phrase to be taken at face value: at least, this was Greville's opinion, who claimed deliberately to cast his own literary works "into that hypocritical figure ironia wherein men . . . seem to make toyes of the uttermost they can do."² The claim to idleness is a cover for more serious meanings. When John Harington published his translation of Ariosto in 1591, he offered an almost hermetic understanding of the way romance both reveals and conceals its own meaningfulness:

the weaker capacities will feede themselues with the pleasantnes of the historie and sweetnes of the verse, some that haue stronger stomackes will as it were take a further taste of the Morall sence, a third sort more high conceited then they, will digest the Allegorie: so as indeed it hath bene thought by men of verie good iudgement, such manner of Poeticall writing was an excellent way to preserue all kinde of learning from that corruption which now it is come to since they left that mysticall writing of verse.³

The pleasures of fictionality do a double labor, at once making allegory's bitter pill taste sweet enough for "weaker capacities" and distracting those weaker capacities from the meanings preserved inside. Pleasure

disguises serious and even dangerous meanings under the apparent idleness of fiction and thus preserves those meanings from "corruption"—that is, not only from the threat of being lost to all knowledge but also from the threat of being too widely known. Allegorized romance enables a secret or "mysticall" writing that transmits its knowledge only to the few who can understand it.

In the text usually known as the "Dedication to Sidney," Greville engages this mode of allegorizing romance as the possibility of a political reading of the genre: like a number of recent critics, he seeks to recover covert political significance from the erotic fictions of Sidney's *Arcadia*.⁴ For Greville, this is to save Sidney from his own perhaps idle impulses. Sidney, Greville wrote, "had that dexterity . . . to make the Arcadian antiques beautify the margents of his works"—a locution that marginalizes the *Arcadia* even in acknowledging its beauty—"yet . . . his end in them was not vanishing pleasure alone" (134). In H.R. Woudhuysen's terms, Greville seeks to save Sidney the "Protestant knight" from Sidney the "secular writer of erotic fictions."⁵

The "Dedication" performs this act of rescue in part through a theorization of literary genre. Designed to preface a collection of Greville's plays, the "Dedication" begins by reading the *Arcadia* as an allegory of Elizabethan politics, arguing that its story of a king who retreats from political life into a pastoral dream-world allegorizes Elizabeth's refusal to commit herself fully to the politics of international Protestantism. But at the end of the "Dedication," Greville suddenly dismisses the *Arcadia*, praising it yet wishing it "may be the last in this kind." (134). With this, he turns from his memories of Sidney and Elizabeth to introduce his own tragedies as a substitute for an unfinished Elizabethan romance. This replacement of one literary form by another testifies to changed times: tragedy suits James's reign just as romance suited Elizabeth's. But more than this, tragedy dramatizes the failure of Sidney's project as Greville understood it: that is, the project of figuring delay in a digressive fiction in order to incite new forms of political action. Tragedy exposes romance's limitations, or, rather, reconceives as limitations the very features Greville had earlier imagined as constitutive of romance: its digressions, its wandering, dilatory fictionality, and the time it spends with idle pleasures. Greville's tragedies supplement and finally supplant Sidney's romance, carrying on in a new manner the interrupted project Greville attributed to the *Arcadia*.

This complex relationship to romance, at once nostalgic and antagonistic, offers a vital entry-point into Greville's tragedies. Those tragedies mourn the lost possibilities of the age of Sidney, the fading romance of

Protestant England. They also depict the consequences of that loss as an Islamicization of the political world. A post-romantic world turns out to have a local habitation and a name: the Islamic world, the scene of a form of political life Greville also associated with Jacobean England and with what he saw as a transformed mode of political existence. The Asia that looms over Sidney's *Arcadia* is the space of adventure and of the possibility of heroic and masculine self-assertion: the romance's two princes have arrived in Greece after a year's travel "through the lesser Asia, Syria, and Egypt," of which the narrator of the *Old Arcadia* remarks, "how many ladies they defended from wrongs, and disinherited persons restored to their rights, it is a work for a higher style than mine."⁶ Sidney's Asia is a scene of heroic exploits, a testing ground for the active political virtue of his Greek princes, and the site of Sidney's more epic impulses: the *New Arcadia* expands at length on the Asian adventures only glancingly recollected in the earlier text.⁷

Greville's east is something darker, a site of tragedy, violence, and an all-encompassing will to power, where all human relations are abrogated in the interests of state security. In Greville's hands, Islamic politics enables a diagnosis of Jacobean political life. It also enables a complex reflection on the concept of "the political." I will argue that Greville's Islamic tragedies attempt to resist the transformation of "politics" into "the political," that is, a sphere of human life and action severed from the demands of religion. This was a transformation Greville thought he saw occurring all around him in the first decade of James's reign, in the abandonment of the policies he associated with his dead friend Sidney. No longer could the indirections of romance spur a renewed commitment to what he understood as political virtue; in this new world, a new politics united England and Islam, collapsing the old binaries that in Sidney's rewriting of a classical commonplace had apportioned reason and rational governance to the west, and the tyranny of unregulated passions and unrestrained power to the east. In targeting Jacobean politics, Greville took aim against what he perceived as a denatured conception of human political life, stripped of its relationship to the divine—a political world in which the old notion of Christendom could have no real meaning.

Greville's final injunction to the readers of the volume of his works announced in the "Dedication to Sidney" is to "use it freely" (135). More than an invitation to read, this phrase suggests what reading means, for Greville: the literary text is a thing to be "used," an intellectual instrument whose value lies in the tasks it prepares the reader to accomplish. "Freely" not only signals that readers should feel no

restraint in their use of the text but also evokes the ends at which the text aims: the inculcation of the virtues of political freedom in the subject of a legally-constituted monarchy. When Greville writes "use it freely," he means each of these words with a precision disguised as the politeness of an invitation. This is not an invitation but a command.⁸

This command expresses the meaning—as Greville represents it—of the two "texts" with which he begins: the text of Sidney's life and the text of the *Arcadia*. Both impart the same lesson, although in different ways. At the opening of the "Dedication," Greville offers a brief defense of literature that conflates his own project in the "Dedication" with Sidney's project in the *Arcadia* and with Sidney's life:

For that this representing of virtues, vices, humours, counsels and actions of men in feigned and un-scandalous images is an enabling of free-born spirits to the greatest affairs of state, he himself hath left such an instance in the too short scene of his life as I fear many ages will not draw a line out of any other man's sphere to parallel it. (3)

Greville is here defending himself against the charge of inaction, of preferring the "safe memory of dead men" to "doubtful conversation among the living."⁹ He turns this justification of intellectual retirement into a theory of the relationship between literature and politics: literature enables "free-born spirits to the greatest affairs of state." Greville aims to "stir up" his "drooping memory" of Sidney so that "our nation may see a sea-mark raised upon their native coast above the level of any private pharos abroad, and so, by a right meridian of their own, learn to sail through the straits of true virtue into a calm and spacious ocean of human honour" (4). Writing is both a form of political action and an incitement to it, figured here in the imperial image of a ship sailing past Gibraltar.

All literature, for Greville, is at once a deferral of political action and an oblique, indirect way of pursuing such action. Sidney's romance makes this detour its subject. The "Arcadian romances," Greville writes, warn of the dangers that ensue "when sovereign princes, to play with their own visions, will put off public action, which is the splendour of majesty, and unactively charge the managing of their greatest affairs upon the second-hand faith and diligence of deputies." Such a course of action produces "a cloud of contempt" in their subjects and encourages "the conspiracies of ambitious subalterns" (8). Sidney's Basileus, in his pastoral retreat from the court, is "a princely shepherd or shepherdish king," and a warning to all like-minded monarchs (9).

The deferral of action embodied in the plot of the *Arcadia* signals a dissatisfaction with Elizabeth's reluctance to embrace the cause of international Protestantism, as Greville suggests by juxtaposing his reading of Sidney's romance with an account of Elizabethan politics. After the first chapter offers its reading of the romance as a condemnation of the "shepherdish king," the second chapter describes Sidney's efforts to draw England into the conflicts on the continent and Elizabeth's "a little neglect" of him, a neglect contrasted in the following chapter by Greville's picture of Sidney's reputation abroad (18). The story of Sidney's life is itself an unfinished romance, a digressive fiction cut short by Sidney's premature death. In that unfinished romance, the recalcitrant Elizabeth, like the recalcitrant Basilius, blocks the hero's desires and then, after his death, blocks Greville's efforts to become a surrogate Sidney.

The later chapters, however, effect a striking rehabilitation of Elizabeth. "She was never afraid or ashamed to avow the quarrel of religion," Greville writes; in her dealings with the Commons, "never did she fetch or farce precedents from her predecessors" or "by any curious search after evidence to enlarge her prerogative royal, teach her subjects in Parliament . . . to make as curious inquisition among their records" (102, 103). With a prophetic foresight, Elizabeth saw that "every excess of passion expressed from the monarch in Acts or Counsels of State would infallibly stir up in the people the like cobwebs," and she knew to seek the people's love, not raise up favorites over them (105). James is clearly the target of this part of the "Description," with his efforts to impose what Greville describes as "prerogative taxes wherein the people have neither voices nor valuable return" (114), his notorious preferment of favorites—suggested also by Greville's description of Basilius discharging his responsibilities on a "second-hand faith"—and, above all, his abandonment of the war with Spain. Sidney's example shows that greatness of heart is not "dead everywhere," and "that war is both a fitter mould to fashion it, and stage to act it on, than peace can be" (79). Elizabeth would have continued the war, he asserts, had she not died when she did, "or time not neglected her wisdom so suddenly by changing that active, victorious, enriching and balancing course of her defensive wars for an idle, I fear deceiving, shadow of peace"—a sentence that tactfully makes "time" the agent of this process, at once implying James's responsibility and keeping quiet about it (127). In his commitment to the war with Spain, Greville even praises Elizabeth's Islamic alliances: she kept "this fearful standard of the half-moon waving in such manner over all the King of Spain's designs as he durst move nowhere against his

neighbor Christian princes for fear of being encompassed within the horns of that heathen crescent" (128). It was a policy licensed, for Greville, by a Spenserian reversal that turns Philip II into "this devouring sultan," "this Suleiman of Spain" (59, 60).

The incompleteness of the *Arcadia* allegorizes the incompleteness of Sidney's political vision and the subsequent Jacobean abandonment of that vision. This may in part be what motivated Greville in 1586 to block the publication of the *Old Arcadia*—which was, after all, complete, even if it perhaps did not represent Sidney's final intentions—and four years later to see through the press the unfinished *New Arcadia*, even though the reading of Sidney's text offered in the "Description" in fact depends on the unrevised text as well as on the revised one.¹⁰ The *New Arcadia* is more in line with Greville's vision of Sidney: more heroic, more determined to show its author's reading in history, geography, and political theory, more skeptical about romance.¹¹ But the incompleteness of the *New Arcadia* may also have attracted Greville. Incompleteness is a central concept of the "Description," recalling at once Sidney's early death and the refusal of English history to take the course Greville had predicted for it:

if this excellent image-maker had lived to finish and bring to perfection this extraordinary frame of his own commonwealth—I mean the return of Basileus—from his dreams of humour to the honour of his former estate, the marriages of the two sisters with the two excellent princes, their issue, the wars stirred up by Amphialus, his marriage with Helen, their successions, together with the incident magnificences, poms of state, providences of councils in treaties of peace or alliance, summons or wars and orderly executions of their disorders—I say, what a large field an active, able spirit should have had to walk in. (10)

Elizabeth's deferrals become a tragic abridgement, of the text of the *Arcadia* and of Sidney's life: neither will bring to perfection the actions left indefinitely suspended. The plot in question in this passage, as that equivocating phrase "his own commonwealth" hints, is at once the plot of the *Arcadia* and the plot of the militant Protestant faction in England. Narrative form stands in for political aspirations, plot for plotting, and romance for long-deferred resolutions, for the safe return to port after long wandering.

Tragedy emerges, in the "Description," as the generic term for the failure of romance. The word is first used of Sidney's death: from the romance of his youth we suddenly arrive at "the last scene of this tragedy," a phrase that enacts a kind of retrospective generic transformation of Sidney's life (82). When it next appears a few pages later it

is used of Greville's plays, marking the turn from Sidney's biography to the texts Greville is introducing: "The works, as you see, are tragedies, with some treatises annexed" (90). We may already suspect some relationship between the tragedy of Sidney's death and Greville's own published tragedies.

In the last chapter of the "Dedication," Greville offers his theory of tragedy. His purpose in writing the plays, he tells us, was not to emulate classical tragedy by exemplifying "the disastrous miseries of man's life," nor to emulate modern tragedy by displaying "God's revenging aspect upon every particular sin," but rather "to trace out the high-ways of ambitious governors, and to show in the practice of life that the more audacity, advantage and good success such sovereignties have, the more they hasten to their own desolation and ruin" (133). The key phrase in this dense passage is "the practice of life": Greville's aim is not merely to deny or to assert the workings of an external providence, but to hold that providence in suspension, to plunge his readers into the uncertainty of experience, to make them feel the weight of the ethical and political choices confronting his characters. What interests him is uncertainty, debate, inner strife. The implication of dramatizing this "practice of life" is that providence is no external force separate from the process of experience but something internal to human political life itself: providence, insofar as it appears in Greville's plays, inheres in the logic of our choices, and in the political logic that dictates that tyrants engineer their own ruin. In this way Greville seeks to show that even the most calculating exercise of political reason returns us to the divine, that it can never escape the divine. By pursuing a political logic seemingly stripped of theological content, by plunging us into the "practice of life," he will reveal the providence that shapes political history.

Greville seeks to suture political thought to the providential scope of tragic narrative as he understands it, by plunging us into the "practice of life" or, as he later puts it, "images of life": "I found my creeping genius more fixed upon the images of life than the images of wit." The word "creeping" sounds apologetic, and Greville certainly has a history of modesty, especially when he is thinking of Sidney. But in this case the modesty rings false. The rest of the sentence makes clear how important this focus on images of life is, for Greville. He writes "to those only that are weather-beaten in the sea of this world, such as, having lost the sight of their gardens and groves, study to sail on a right course among rocks and quicksands" (134). His plays chart a voyage away from the idyllic locations of romance pastoralism into a stormy world. And yet the language here, with its imagery of seas, rocks, and shipwreck, suggests not

just a turning away from romance but an effort to follow the course laid out by romance, even if that effort requires a tragic detour. Romance often includes tragedy as one of the moments on its course to safe haven. Greville pursues the experience of tragedy without the certainty of safe arrival, but still with the hope that something can be salvaged from the tragic experience itself, that those who are "weather-beaten in the sea of this world" will find an incitement to new forms of hope and action.

Both of Greville's tragedies set their scene in the contemporary Islamic world. I will focus on the better-known of the two plays, *Mustapha*, a play based on a story with wide currency in the early modern period.¹² In its various published versions, it recounts the rise of an ambitious woman, Rossa or Roxolana, a "Circassian bondwoman" who became Sultan Suleiman's favorite concubine and eventually his wife, bearing him five children.¹³ But Suleiman also had an older son, who "through his magnanimity and fortitude," as Hugh Goughe writes, "was in wondrous estimation with the souldyers, and for hys graue wisdom and vpright iustice, marueilously fauored of the people" (I5v; K1r). In order to guarantee that the succession would light on one of her sons rather than Mustapha, Rossa convinced Suleiman that Mustapha was planning to overthrow him. Suleiman set a trap for his son; Mustapha discovered the plot but went to meet his fate anyway, hoping to convince his father of his innocence; and he died, strangled by his father's eunuchs and seven mutes kept for that purpose: in William Painter's words, "the *Eunuches* and dombe Men threw him prostrate vpon the ground, and cording the string with a double knot, most pitifully strangled him" (2X5r).

This was a story that Greville apparently struggled to tell: his *Mustapha* remains extant in multiple print and manuscript versions that between them give evidence of an extended process of revision. According to Ronald Rebholz, Greville first wrote the play between 1594 and 1596 in a version probably corresponding to the text preserved in a manuscript now at the Folger Shakespeare Library. The manuscript at the Cambridge University Library and the text published in quarto in 1609 both represent successive revisions of it; the "Warwick" manuscript and the text published posthumously in a folio collection of Greville's works represent still further revisions.¹⁴ In addition we have Greville's testimony that the work of revision produced, as a side effect, the verse political treatises with which he meant his plays to be published: "The treatises, to speak truly of them, were first intended to be for every act a chorus," but those choruses "did easily wander beyond proportion" and were excised as separate works (90).

Among the revisions included in the latest texts of *Mustapha* are a series of new choruses presumably intended to replace the ones excerpted as free-standing works: after the first act, a chorus of "*Basha's*, or *Caddies*," the heads of the Ottoman administrative and judicial system; after the second act, a chorus "Of Mahometan *Priests*"; and after the fourth act, a chorus of "*Conuerts to Mahometisme*." These choruses offer political readings of the action of the play. The pashas and qadis describe how a tyrant misuses those "of higher place," deputizing them to ratify his will instead of relying on them for guidance: "where the Better rules the Greater part, / And reason onely is the Princes Art; / There, as in Margents of great volum'd Bookes, / The little notes, whereon the Reader looks, / Oft aide his ouerpressed memory."¹⁵ This prompting of an overpressed reader is also an overruling: "the Better *rules* the Greater part." The pashas and qadis insist on the formative role of political elites as a factor limiting the otherwise excessive power of the monarch. As they conclude, "*Thrones should not be infinite*" (Q1v).

The later chorus of "Mahometan *Priests*" offers the image of an Ottoman world where all spheres of life are tied to the demands of empire. Christendom is divided into "grosse Sects" and a multitude of "Thrones, Schooles, Miters, Idols," but the Turks have "vnity of minde," including a unity of secular and religious authority: as the priests tell us, "till of late, our Church and Prince were one, / . . . like mutuall Voice, and *Eccho*, tide / With one desire iontly to moue, speake, doe" (R4r-v). Religion had ruled the state, but now the state manipulates religion. The lesson the chorus teaches is that things are not so different in Christendom. The Turks operate by force, whereas the Christians tie "Craft, and Force together":

The Christian bondage is much more refin'd,
Though not in reall Things, in reall Names;
Lawes, Doctrine, Discipline, being all assign'd
To hold vpright that wittie *Man-built* frame;
Where euery limbe, though in themselues distinct,
Yet finely are vnto the Scepter linckt. (S1v)

Religion and law, while they claim to limit power, are the means whereby power operates: what Greville describes is the difference between the literal exercise of power and a hegemonic domination produced as the total effect of a series of social and political formations. Both systems strain toward the same end, although the Turkish one perfects that end: "Where we are," the priests slyly note, "there

Christians faine would be" (S2v). Christian hegemony, it seems, is an imperfect imitation of Turkish total domination.

Greville describes a world in which institutions that ought to exert a counter-pressure on the monarch's power instead collude with it or else turn against each other in a conflict Greville calls "*Ciivil Warre*" (Y1r). The church, the laws, and the political elites should all "refine" and guide the power of the monarch, but too much friction in this relationship destroys the state, a point dramatized in the last two acts. When the news of Mustapha's death spreads, the soldiers revolt and Achmat, one of the pashas, debates whether or not he should assist the rebellion. At first he imagines himself telling the people to "Question these thrones of Tyrants; / Reuiue your old equalities of nature," in language right out of early modern resistance theory.¹⁶ The fourth act of the play ended with a priest similarly sanctioning popular rebellion: "*where Order is not, Change is free, / And giues all rights to Popularitie*" (X2v). But Mustapha had rejected this argument—"Our Gods they are," he says of kings—and Achmat finally arrives at the same position: "Shall Man the Damme, and Graue of Crownes, / With Mutinie, pull sacred Scepters downe?"¹⁷ We seem to be left in paralysis, caught between tyrannical power and illegitimate resistance.

The converts figure this war among the elements of the state as "*Ocean* ebbs, and flouds" (X4r). Achmat similarly imagines the upheavals of power as a stormy sea, speaking of "*Aeolus* bitter breathing, / Or thunder-blasts, which comming from the skie, / Doe fall most heauy on the places high" (Q1v). The image dominates act five, as Zanger commits suicide, the army rebels, and Achmat decides whether or not to sponsor their rebellion. Zanger speaks of "the stormes of Rage" (Y3r), Rosten of "this storme of Mischiefe" (Y4r-v), and Rossa of "the Stormes" that "all things, but themselues . . . ouerthrow" (Z2r). In the "Dedication," Greville writes to those who are "weather-beaten in the sea of this world" (134). The storm hits in the last act of *Mustapha*.

But the conflicts that threaten a universal deluge in *Mustapha* are also the source of order: "*Elements*, . . . opposite in kinde" can nevertheless be "combinde / To make their Discords base vnto that harmonic, / In whose sweet vnion mildely linkt all Powers concurre to be" (Y1r). The several elements of the state potentially produce a pull of opposites that is not chaos but "sweet vnion." The key to this balancing act is the giving of counsel. The play revolves around a series of scenes of debate and counsel, between Soliman and Rossa, Soliman and Achmat, Soliman and Camena, Mustapha and the priest, Achmat and Zanger. *Mustapha* is composed almost entirely of such

debates: Greville dramatizes not so much a story as a series of acts of reasoning and persuasion centering on the turning points of that story. Psychologically, he isolates the condition of uncertainty; politically, he focuses on the scene of counsel as dramatizing a proper political balance.

This concept of monarchy limited by its willing adherence to necessary counsel clearly links Greville's Ottoman scene to English politics in the early seventeenth century and particularly to ongoing conflicts over the interpretation of the king's prerogative and the privileges of Parliament. Greville's pashas claim they are responsible for "husbanding the Scepters spreading right," but also for resisting its efforts to "grow infinite; / Or with Prerogative to Tyrannize, / *Whose workes proue oft more absolute, than wise*" (P4r). "Prerogative" was a key term of early Jacobean politics, especially in the debate over impositions. The crux of this debate was whether or not the king had the right to impose a customs tax on imported goods. According to members of the house of Commons, common law required parliamentary consent for taxation, and if the king attempted to levy a tax without that consent he was violating the right of property and acting as a tyrant. In the 1610 parliament, Richard Martin accused the king of trying to establish "an arbitrary, irregular, unlimited, and transcendant power of the King," while William Hakewill and James Whitelocke warned that such a grant of power would cause "the utter dissolution and destruction of that politic frame and constitution of this Commonwealth."¹⁸ In the "Dedication to Sidney," Greville warned how France had transformed "parliaments, laws and customs" into "the narrowness of imperial mandates," "gentry into peasants," "peasants into slaves," and "crown revenue into impositions": parliamentary control of taxation separates the legally-protected subject from the vulnerable slave (58). But according to James and his advisers, on the other hand, imported goods fell under the purview of the royal prerogative, not common law, and so belonged to that legal space within which the king could operate with a free hand.¹⁹ Impositions were first debated in Bate's Case in 1606, in which it was decided that the king had acted legally since the goods in question were foreign-owned. Later parliaments refused this reasoning, however, and impositions continued to be debated in the 1610 parliament.²⁰ It was in 1610, according to Rebholz, that Greville finished the revisions to *Mustapha* as well as the first draft of the "Dedication."²¹

The pashas repeatedly evoke this debate. In the opening lines of the chorus they speak of "Those heauy Taxes, wherewith Princes wound," making the people "poore, and consequently base"; later they refer,

more metaphorically, to “an heauy taxe” (P3r-v). These hints culminate in an extended image of the Ottoman state as a deceptively smooth ocean: as the “sweet breath” of the wind drives the waves, “Enforcing men, for taxe, to throw their goods / Into his mercilesse, enticing floods,” so too a peaceful state imperceptibly rises into violence and tyranny:

So doth vast Power, at first, spread out her flights
Of Grace, and Honor; *smooth bewitching bayts*,
And when mens Liues, their Goods, and Libertie,
Are left in trust once with her Tyrannie;
Then, *Ocean-like*, blowne vp with stormes of passion,
Which, but excesse, makes all seeme out of fashion,
It takes aduange [sic] to deuoure the Iust,
Because to *Lawes*, that limit *Thrones*, they trust. (Q1r)

England can quickly be blown into a state of tyranny as shocking as that of Greville’s Ottoman Empire. In the pashas’ words, the image of the ocean, of merchant goods thrown into the sea, links the metaphor of the storm to the literal questions of shipping, property, and taxation that were absorbing so much political attention. And here again Greville repeats the quiet keyword of this chorus, “taxe.”

Perhaps the clearest indication of the importance of these references to taxation in the revised *Mustapha* comes when the priest enters disclaiming against “False *Mahomet*” and his “Monarchall lawes.” According to the quarto text, the priest laments that

we doe preach, your bodies to the warre,
Your goods to spoile, your freedome into bands. (E2r)

Property rights were already an old topic in English common law, and this passage simply reiterates the commonplace that makes the defense of property a symbol of good government. But the folio introduces a slight but crucial revision:

we doe preach your bodies to the Warre;
Your goods to Taxe; your Freedom vnto bands. (V4r)

The revision of “spoile” to “Taxe” turns the passage from a general comment on tyranny into a more contentious suggestion that what James called legitimate taxation was in fact an unjust seizure of goods. Revisionist historians have de-emphasized the opposition of constitutional and absolutist politics, arguing that both sides in the impositions

debates agreed on a basic conception of English political life, and that both emphasized the cooperation of king and parliament.²² Greville's pashas speak in a political idiom based on notions of balance and harmony, and the final act of the play explicitly refuses the right to rebellion. Nevertheless, even if a broad vision of the bases of English political life was shared by those promoting and resisting the crown's stance on impositions, there were radically different interpretations of what that shared vision meant.

What Greville wants is a real dialogue between the two elements of England's mixed sovereignty, king and parliament. His pashas decry a state in which "the Art of powerfull Tyrannie / Hath vndermin'd mans natieue libertie," but the monarch is not the only problem: "when Selfenesse hath mens hearts estrang'd, / Is not one Soueraigne soone to many chang'd?"²³ A nation contending with itself about authority is already at war with itself. *Mustapha* envisions a political world in which consensus has been lost, in which factions compete for influence, and in which law and religion have been subordinated to fear and suspicion, which license every desperate act thought to help preserve the state. Jacobean England nurses within itself a kind of Turkishness that destroys consensus and the grounds for mutually beneficial action.

Greville's *Mustapha* turns the depiction of Ottoman tyranny into a lesson for England. In this, he draws on some long-standing ideas about politics in the "east." The idea that tyranny was natural to the east has a long history: Aristotle had theorized it in his *Politics*, and sixteenth-century readers could easily connect that analysis to the stories of Persian and Egyptian tyranny related, for example, by Herodotus, for whom, François Hartog has argued, "the people of Asia are incapable, not of seeking liberty, but of living with it."²⁴ Aristotle argued for a division of humanity between those who are by nature free and those who are by nature slaves, and while the first book of the *Politics* acknowledges the difficulties in making this distinction—it corresponds to no clear physical differences and is not necessarily heritable—the seventh book locates tyranny more precisely: "the natives of Asia," Aristotle writes, "are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery."²⁵ Plato makes a similar claim in the *Laws*, where he ascribes the tyranny of Persia to the education of its rulers: while their fathers are off at war, the princes are "imbued by women and eunuchs with an education . . . corrupted by what is called fortune." They are indulged in every whim, trained into no discipline, given everything they want. The result is a tyrant whose abuse of the laws parallels his inability to

rule his own desires.²⁶ Plato's account offers no sense that the Persian people can resist arbitrary rule: the only exceptions he mentions in his history of oppression—the reigns of Cyrus and Darius—are due exclusively to the arrival on the throne of a king not trained up by “the women of a royal harem.”²⁷

Representations of Ottoman tyranny also centered on stories about the harem, as the scene not of the subjugation of women but of the sultan's own subjugation to lust, to unrestrained desires, to femininity.²⁸ Greville found this dynamic ready to hand in earlier published versions of Mustapha's story. Richard Knolles wrote of Roxolana that she “ceased not with pleasing allurements and flatterie . . . to infect *Solyman's* mind”; in Hugh Goughe's words, “Soliman” was “blinded beyonde all measure with sensuall appetite.”²⁹ William Painter is still more elaborate: “the libinonous lustes of this Lecherous Infidell so surmounted the bounds of reason . . . [that] Tiranny like an Enchaunter with the Sorcery of Feminine adulation shed the bloud of his owne begotten” (2V3r). The symbol of tyranny is a man ruled by women. Mustapha's story provided the period with a tragic narrative of lust and violence that recalled classical stories like that of Cambyses but translated the analysis of tyranny to the political scene of modern Turkey.

But representations of Ottoman politics were more complex than this, and Greville's version of the Mustapha story, with its long history of anxious and almost obsessive rewriting, certainly suggests that something more was at stake. If the clear resonance of the Mustapha story with classical models for narrating tyranny was what first attracted Greville to it, the reading about the Ottoman Empire that he subsequently did may have revealed something different from and perhaps more troubling than what he set out to find. The work of revision in *Mustapha* centers on the passages that engage political theory and political analyses of the Ottoman Empire: this much we can ascertain from the much-expanded choruses of the later drafts and from Greville's claim that his verse political treatises had their origins as early drafts of those choruses. If this is so, it suggests that what inspired Greville's revisions was at least in part something “in” Ottoman politics.

The Ottoman Empire was not simply a model of tyranny: it was also the scene of a radically cosmopolitan social and political life. The harem, the primal scene of oriental despotism, embodied this hybridity. Mullisheg, king of Fez in Thomas Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, demands a harem that will be a small world in itself:

the loueliest of the Moores
Wee can command, and Negroes every where.

Italians, French, and Dutch, choice Turkish Girles
 Must fill our Alkedavy, the great Pallace,
 Where *Mullisheg* now daines to keepe his Court.³⁰

Roxolana herself was “a Circassian bondwoman,” in Knolles’s phrase (3T1r). The center of Ottoman power was the scene both of a supposedly perverse sexuality and a radical hybridity, a practice of miscegenation installed at the heart of the empire.

The Ottoman Empire was altogether a hybrid entity: the political classes of the empire were constituted, as English observers knew, by a wide-ranging process of recruitment that guaranteed that Ottoman soldiers, diplomats, and officials would in large measure be Serbians, Greeks, Italians, and others. All things “concerning the state,” Richard Knolles wrote, the sultan put “into the hands of Apostata or renegade Christians, whom for most part euery third, fourth, or fift year (or oftener if his need so require) he taketh in their childhood from their miserable parents” (5F2r). These children were sent into different schools, some in the provinces and some, “the fairest and most handsome,” in the sultan’s “Serraglio.” The schools themselves were the scene of a discipline that trained the children into a new cultural and personal habitus: “learning the Turkish language and law, they are also infected with the vices and maners of them with whome they liue, and so in short time become right Mahometanes” (5F3v). In the very structure of the state, the Ottoman regime embodied an assimilative power that denaturalized identity, revealing it as something acquired: one learned to become a “Turk,” and one could just as easily forget what it meant to be Christian or Serbian or English.³¹

This levy of children was the means whereby Ottoman soldiers and bureaucrats were recruited: “arms . . . and all things els concerning the state and the gouernment thereof” are put into their hands, as Knolles wrote.³² Here, according to Ottaviano Bon, “they have their educations, who afterward become the principal officers, and subordinate rulers of the state, and affairs of the whole Empire.”³³ The levy of children or *devşirme* was often invoked simply as one more example of the horrors of Turkish rule, but those who thought about it in detail identified it as an entirely different mode of social and political organization. This was not a court run by aristocrats and favorites. It was a centralized bureaucratic regime whose schools produced a class of soldiers and administrators separated from family and nation, educated in the disciplines of state service, and loyal only to the state. Taken from their parents, Knolles wrote, they “depend wholly of the great Sultan, who . . . both feeds them and fosters them, at whose

hands only they looke for all things" (5F2r). A comprehensive bureaucracy more sophisticated than anything in Europe organized virtually every aspect of Ottoman governance from the infantry to the highest viziers. In this system, as Daniel Goffman writes, a Bosnian might rise to be grand vizier like Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, or a Hungarian might become admiral of the sultan's navy, like Piyâle Pasha.³⁴

The Ottoman system was recognized as embodying a radically distinct form of political life. Describing his arrival at Suleiman's court, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, the Emperor Ferdinand's ambassador in Istanbul from 1554 to 1562, wrote that there was not

in all that great assembly a single man who owed his position to aught save his valour and his merit. No distinction is attached to birth among the Turks; the deference to be paid to a man is measured by the position he holds in the public service . . . It is by merit that men rise in the service, a system which ensures that posts should only be assigned to the competent . . . This is the reason that [the Turks] are successful in their undertakings, that they lord it over others, and are daily extending the bounds of their empire.³⁵

Busbecq isolates what most distinguishes the Turkish system: the absence of heritable social position. Honor depends only on the position one holds in "the public service," a phrase that compactly evokes the whole educational and administrative apparatus described by Knolles, Bon, and others. *Devşirme*, which takes children from their parents to bring them up in a set of state-run educational institutions, is the perfect expression of a Turkish society in which birth means nothing and all rewards are reserved for those who serve. It is a vision that no doubt responds to the rise of administrative and bureaucratic centralization in Europe, projecting a vision of the Ottoman Empire as an extreme and radical case, an intransigent and total statism that obliterates all independent forms of status not granted and controlled by the sultan.

This Ottoman administration presided over an empire that was itself complexly cosmopolitan, as English travelers observed. Cairo, George Sandys wrote, "is inhabited by *Moores, Turks, Negroes, Iewes, Copties, Greeks, and Armenians*"; John Eldred, visiting Aleppo in 1583, wrote that "hither resort Iewes, Tartarians, Persians, Armenians, Egyptians, Indians, and many sorts of Christians, and inioy freedome of their consciences."³⁶ So diverse a society required a cosmopolitan legal and political settlement. Of the sultan's divan, George Wither wrote that "any kinde of person whatsoever (aswell stranger, as native) publicly,

and indifferently may have free accesse unto it, to require Justice, to procure Grants, and to end their Causes, and Controversies" (A8v). In the *divan*, Nicolas de Nicolai explains, "all comers" are welcome to bring their suits, "of what nation or religion soeuer they be" (G7v).

The question of cosmopolitanism recurs in English commentaries perhaps above all around religion. In the sultan's empire, William Lithgow writes, there was "a free Liberty of conscience, for all kinds of Religion."³⁷ What both Lithgow and Eldred register when they refer to liberty of conscience is the Ottoman system for governing religious and ethnic minorities. Minority religious communities were allowed both freedom of conscience and the political freedom to adjudicate conflicts between members of their communities according to their own laws and customs. The existence of these communities or *millet*s afforded certain freedoms but also established certain obligations to the state. All of the members of a *millet* could be forced to offer restitution for a crime committed by one of them—a requirement that outraged the English merchants in Istanbul, organized into their own *millet*, when they were expected to pay for acts of piracy committed by English ships. The *millet*s were also subject to forms of taxation from which the sultan's Muslim subjects, the *reaya*, were free.³⁸

Nevertheless, the *millet* system afforded a degree of freedom for religious and cultural minorities unlike anything in the Latin Christian world. Ottoman practice was noticed by those living under regimes where religious differences continued to generate violence, whether the violence of rebellion or of a state determined to enforce religious conformity. Ottoman religious freedom became a touchstone for political theorists looking for a way to establish a political sovereignty independent of the demands of religion, the effort, that is, to theorize religion and politics as distinct spheres of human life and thus in some sense to invent both "religion" and "politics" as separate concepts and practices. Talal Asad has written of "religion" as the invention of secularization: only with the demands of secularism can religion really be conceived as a thing unto itself, a separate terrain of human life. Only when it is withdrawn from the totality of human social and political life does religion as such appear, and only then does politics begin to take on its distinctive, modern form.³⁹

A key figure in this history is Jean Bodin who, writing in the middle of the French wars of religion, sought to establish political sovereignty as a realm absolute in itself. "Maiestie or Soueraigntie," Bodin famously wrote—in Richard Knolles's translation—"is the most high, absolute, and perpetuall power ouer the citizens and subiects in a Commonweale."⁴⁰ Sovereignty cannot be divided, cannot be parceled

out for periods of time, nor can it be constrained by law. The starkness of this definition—which resurfaced in the twentieth century in the work of Carl Schmitt, who looked back to the early modern period in framing his own theory of sovereignty—represents Bodin’s effort to shore up the power of the state against those who sought to subordinate its authority to the demands of religion.⁴¹ Among both Calvinists and Catholics, “resistance” theorists—like Greville’s Muslim priest—argued that the monarch’s breach of divine law could be punished by the lesser magistrates or even by popular rebellion. Bodin’s conception of sovereignty puts the state securely beyond the bounds of religious contention.

Bodin based his theory on a wide-ranging and comparative reading in world history: the project of the *Six Bookes of the Commonwealth* extended the method for reading history he had outlined earlier in the *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, in which he argued that a comparative study of all legal and political systems should replace a jurisprudence predicated exclusively on Roman law. To “establish law and govern a state,” Bodin wrote, one must “bring together and compare the legal framework of all states,” including the Ottoman Empire: “we should have the public law on which that flourishing and powerful empire has been established.”⁴²

The *Methodus* does in fact show evidence of Bodin’s reading about Ottoman history and government.⁴³ But between writing the *Methodus* and the *Six Bookes*, he clearly extended that reading. His comments on the Ottoman Empire in the *Six Bookes* suggest the ways in which the pressure of religious violence motivated his theory of sovereignty. For Bodin, the empire was not a despotic regime but a “lordly monarchy,” that is, a monarchy “where the prince is become lord of the goods and persons of his subiects, by law of armes and lawfull warre.”⁴⁴ Bodin places it in a list of other absolute monarchies, including “the true Monarques of Fraunce, of Spain, of England, Scotland, Turkie, Moschouie, Tartarie, Persia, Æthiopia, India, and of almost all the kingdomes of Affricke, and Asia” (V3v). Refusing to distinguish in any absolute terms between European, Asian, and African forms of monarchy, Bodin also endorses Ottoman practices usually singled out as the marks of Turkish tyranny—including the murder of Mustapha by his own father.⁴⁵ This is the first story Bodin tells in defense of his proposition that monarchy is natural, and he argues that it shows that the demands of the state supersede even those of family.⁴⁶ Like Busbecq, Bodin takes note of the Ottoman administrative structure and the *devşirme* system. “Those youths which are taken from the Christians as tribute,” he writes, “I neuer

accounted them for slaues; seeing they are enrolled in the princes familie, and that they alone enioy the great offices, honours, priesthoods, authoritie and honour" (E4v).

Bodin also endorses the Ottoman practice of religious tolerance. In the last chapter of Book Four, he addresses the question of factions within the state in a discussion that culminates with the question of religious difference. He begins with conventional assertions: religion is the mainstay of order; a received religion should not be questioned; religious disputes cause "the ruine and destruction of Commonweales" (2Z4v). These claims seem to point to the importance of religious unity, but Bodin takes a different turn, insisting that the attempt to enforce religious unity only exacerbates conflict. In support of this, he cites the Ottomans:

The great Emperour of the Turkes doth with as great deuotion as any prince in the world honour and obserue the religion by him receiued from his auncestours, and yet detesteth hee not the straunge religions of others; but to the contrarie permitteth euery man to liue according to his conscience: yea and that more is, neere vnto his pallace at Pera, suffereth foure diuers religions, *viz.* That of the Iewes, that of the Christians, that of the Grecians, and that of the Mahometans: and besides that, sendeth almes vnto the Calogers or religious Monkes, dwelling vpon the mountaine Athos (being Christians) to pray for him. (2Z5r)

Bodin commends not only tolerance but even, it seems, the heterodox religious practice of the Muslim emperor who sends alms to a Christian monastery.

In a manuscript that would remain unpublished until 1841—although copies of it circulated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—Bodin offered a more radical take on Ottoman religious pluralism.⁴⁷ The *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* concludes with its seven speakers—a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, a natural philosopher, a skeptic, a convert to Islam, and a Jew—agreeing to praise the practice of religious tolerance toward all those who do not "confound the people and the order of the state by seditious gatherings" (471). But one speaker, the skeptic Senamus, invokes the example of Islamic tolerance in the service of a more radical vision:

If all people could be persuaded as the Ismaelites, Octavius [the Muslim convert], and I are that all the prayers of all people which come from a pure heart are pleasing to God, or surely are not displeasing, it would be possible to live everywhere in the world in the same harmony as those who live under the emperor of the Turks or Persians. (467)

Drawing on Paul's claim to have become "all things to all men," Senamus describes himself worshipping in churches, synagogues, and mosques alike, imagining that all religions serve the same divinity, and that all are perfected insofar as they approximate the purely ethical core of natural religion (466). The promise of political toleration here becomes a full-blown heterodoxy. In the *Colloquium*, this is a vision shared by the skeptic, the philosopher, the Muslim convert, the Jew, and perhaps also—to some extent—by the Catholic in whose house the dialogue takes place.⁴⁸

In the *Six Bookes*, Bodin does not go this far: he hints at the heterodoxy of the Ottoman sultan, but keeps primarily to the argument that religious unity should not be enforced. Bacon would make a similar argument in "Of Unity in Religion," a text that also begins by emphasizing the value of unity, but then goes on to argue the danger of trying to secure it by force.⁴⁹ Bodin turns from this claim to a brief history of intolerance, linking Ottoman practices to those of classical antiquity and blaming intolerance on the Jews: "Only the Iewes of all people detested straunge ceremonies: whereby they prouoked the hatred of all people against them" (2Z5v). Anti-semitism is traced to Jewish exclusionary practices and the Jews are scapegoated for the violence done to them. But it is the violence of the contemporary religious wars that overshadows the chapter: "how often hath the speeches of preachers bene heard, tending by all meanes to haue incited the princes and people to kill, massacre, & burne their subiects" (3A2v). Disputes in religion lead to violence, "as it hath happened almost in all Europe within this fifty yeares" (2Z4r). What Bodin seeks is a wide but not limitless tolerance:

Wicked and straunge rites & ceremonies, and such other as the greater part of the subiects of greatest power detest, I thinke it good and profitable to haue them kept out of the Commonweale. . . . [Y]et if same religion be liked of by the opinion of neighbour nations, and of many of the subiects, then ought it not onely with punishments not to be restrained, but also so much as may be prouided, that if it may not without sedition bee publicly professed, yet that no man be forbidden the priuat exercise of such his religion. (2Z6r)

Religions are to be judged not by theological debate but by political calculation: any religion practiced by a significant number of people or by a neighboring state should be permitted, in private devotions if not in public assemblies. Even assemblies ought only to be banned if they cannot take place "without sedition." What Bodin imagines may fall short of the cosmopolitanism and heterodoxy he attributes to the

Ottoman Empire, but it nevertheless takes the practices of that empire as a model.

Modern accounts of Islamic politics repeat one accusation with monotonous regularity: that in the Islamic world there is no separation between "religion" and "politics," and that, as a result, there is in effect no such thing as an Islamic politics, no conception of the political as such. The whole of Islamic politics, according to commentators like Bernard Lewis, is suffused with the divine in a way regularly defined as "premodern."⁵⁰ For an early modern Europe struggling with precisely this division, on the other hand, the Ottoman Empire appeared not as a holdover from some earlier moment but as an organization of political life that resonated closely with the most current political analyses and above all with the effort to offer a de-theologized account of human political life. It seemed to embody something radically new, in the way it dissolved all social relations into the abstract demands of state service, and in the way it managed cultural, racial, and religious differences, separating loyalty to the state from any demands for unity of culture and belief. This is not to associate the Ottoman Empire with a modern notion of citizenship: the Ottoman regime was founded on an initial act of discrimination between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects and proceeded from that point by a systematic organization of minorities who achieved political rights as members of a *millet*, not as politically equivalent members of the state. But because it aimed at the management of social, political, and economic life in a diverse community, the Ottoman system did present itself as a kind of civil society, that is, as a social world not organized around the violent enforcement of a specious cultural and religious unity but around the recognition and protection of forms of difference.⁵¹ This was a political system that spoke directly to early modern experiences of cross-cultural contact and religious war.

"You can not stepp into a schollars studye," Gabriel Harvey wrote, "but (ten to on) you shall litely finde open ether Bodin de Republica or Le Royes Exposition uppon Aristotles Politiques or sum other like Frenche or Italian Politique Discourses," and even "certayne gallant Turkishe Discourses tooe."⁵² A new political theory took the Ottoman Empire as one of its key objects of analysis. The case of Greville seems to bear out Harvey's claim: Greville's political treatises and his tragedies alike bear the evidence of considerable reading about the Ottoman Empire, including references to *devşirme* and the *millet* system. In the words of Greville's "Mathometan Priests," comparing Christian with Ottoman politics, "They inherit Land; we hope for Place: / They giue the Wealthy; we the Actiue grace"—an analysis that tautly evokes the

contrasts between aristocracy and the Ottoman administrative system offered by Busbecq and Bodin (S2r). Later, Greville's priests refer to their "Taxe, comprising Men, and Things," a clear glance at *devşirme*, and they also invoke the *millet* system with its tolerance for, but heavier taxation on, openly practicing Christians: "we suffer their fond zeale to pray, / That it may well our conquering armies pay" (S1r-v). The Ottoman Empire was not, for Greville, simply an abstract scene of tyranny: it was the hybrid, tolerant, administratively complex political world described by Bodin and others.

Because of its broad religious tolerance, its administrative and bureaucratic centralization, and its putatively ruthless character, Ottoman politics could appear as a radical unmasking of the truth behind all politics. This is Greville's diagnosis: his representation of Suleiman's court, more than just a covert reading of Jacobean policy, constitutes an analysis of human political life. But where Bodin saw a system that powerfully expressed his conception of sovereignty and of the political as such, Greville saw a world in which the demands of power deformed familial relations and severed humanity from its relationship to the divine. *Mustapha* is Greville's effort to analyze and to resist a new world he saw emerging around him, a world in which political life would no longer be organized by the demands of faith, a world abandoning the vision he attributed to Sidney and the *New Arcadia*.

This de-theologized politics demanded a rethinking of the widest horizons of human society. Bodin's work could only theorize political relations within the state: his concept of sovereignty bracketed the question of international relations, the sphere in which the problems he was confronting took on some of their most intransigent forms. But the years after the publication of the *Six Bookes* saw the emergence of a discipline that aimed to continue the work of legal theory beyond the nation by theorizing forms of international political life in newly global terms—that is, to rethink the problem of human community on the largest scale.⁵³ Alberico Gentili writes that his theory of international law "belongs to that great community formed by the entire world and the whole human race."⁵⁴ Hugo Grotius is more cautious: "the law of nations" derives its authority from "the will of all nations, or of many nations."⁵⁵ But he, too, seeks to define the rights and responsibilities inherent in what he calls "the great society of states": where the law of nature belongs to us all of by right of our common descent from Adam and Eve—"a blood-relationship has been established among us by nature" (14)—the law of nations belongs to some more restricted assembly of sovereign powers, even though it, too, can claim to embody "the bond of human society" (309).

Grotius's hesitation about claiming a wholly global basis for his theory marks the intrusion of an anxious sense of cultural difference: "outside the sphere of the law of nature . . . there is hardly any law common to all nations," he writes; in fact, "not infrequently . . . in one part of the world there is a law of nations which is not such elsewhere" (44). Given the fact of these different conceptions of what constitutes human relations, how can we establish the demands made on us by the law of nations? The theory of international law poses the possibility of a regime of justice whose span is genuinely global, and for this Grotius, in particular, is generally remembered as its liberal exponent, for whom, in the words of Ross Harrison, "we are meant to find nothing human alien."⁵⁶ But at the same time, his theory marks limits, dividing its "great society" into those who can and cannot claim their rights. "Brigands" and "pirates" are repeatedly excluded, and there are even those who, by virtue of their crimes against nature, can claim none of the rights of humanity but may be punished, even with death, by anyone at any time.⁵⁷ The idea of a global human community implied the existence of a set of natural laws regulating it, the violation of which could legitimately be punished by war: as Richard Tuck has argued, the seemingly liberal premises of Grotius's theory of natural sociability "neatly legitimated a great deal of European action against native peoples around the world" (103). It is surely relevant that Grotius worked as a lawyer for the Dutch East India Company, and that some of his early work began as briefs written for legal cases involving Company interests.⁵⁸

Even as they opened up a much wider vision of human community, the international law theorists also smuggled into their work the familiar boundaries of an older division of the world. Citing Bodin and the example of Ottoman cosmopolitanism, Gentili argues that there is no such thing as a "natural enemy" and that no natural state of war exists between any two peoples: "we are by nature all akin."⁵⁹ But then he shifts his ground: "War is not waged on account of religion, and war is not natural . . . even with the Turks"; but because the Turks violate the laws of human sociability, it is "almost natural" to be at war with them (56). That "almost" marks the thin line dividing Gentili's conception of global human society from the old notion of Christendom. A whole people can be defined as having "broken the treaty of the human race," thereby becoming "common enemies of all mankind"—a phrase that expands and adapts the more familiar notion of Islam as the common enemy of Christendom (22).

Grotius still more firmly reinscribes the boundaries of Christendom in his account of human sociability. Addressing the question of treaties

with “heathen peoples,” he initially argues that “the right to enter into treaties is so common to all men that it does not admit of a distinction arising from religion” (397, 399). But he increasingly qualifies this argument, expressing caution that “too great intimacy may not bring contamination to the weak” and then asserting that “all Christians are under obligation to enter a league against the enemies of Christianity” (402, 403). “It were greatly to be desired,” in fact,

that to-day many princes and peoples should take to heart the generous and noble utterance of Fulke, formerly Archbishop of Reims . . . : “Who would not be greatly alarmed that you desire the friendship of the enemies of God, and are receiving heathen [*pagana*] armies in detestable alliance?”

The law of nature threatens to erode any sense of the separateness of Christendom, but Grotius resists the global impulses of his own theory. Although religious difference is not a legitimate cause of war (514–17), certain religious principles—that there is a single God, that God cares about human affairs and is the creator of all things—are part of the law of nature, so that violations of these principles may be punished like any other violations of natural law (510–14). It was one of Grotius’s projects to outline the most axiomatic doctrines of true religion, in order to save Christendom from religious war; in the process, he in effect redefined religious war as war against those who violate natural law.⁶⁰ Grotius translated crusade into new legal terms appropriate to a world of Christian confessional divisions and European colonial expansion: he uses the necessity of resisting the Turks to argue for unity among Christian nations but denies the religious basis of that unity; he repudiates crusade, but imagines the Turks as a common enemy defined now in civilizational rather than religious terms. Similarly, he is suspicious of Aristotelian claims about natural slavery, but puts violators of natural law in place of Aristotle’s enslaved Asiatics: “regarding such barbarians, wild beasts rather than men,” he writes, “one may rightly say what Aristotle wrongly said of the Persians, . . . that war against them was sanctioned by nature” (506).

International legal theory was in search of a form of human community transcending the nation as well as the divisions within Christendom. This search had a cosmopolitan aspect that would later find powerful expression in Kant. But it also worked to produce a narrower vision of European political community, and a radical distinction between the conduct of politics within Europe and beyond it—a distinction that helped shape the concept of Europe. Emerich de Vattel,

who was heavily influenced by Grotius, would discover a kind of international society of states in the Europe emerging through the period of the religious wars: according to Vattel, "Europe" embodied "a political system in which the Nations inhabiting this part of the world are bound together by their relations and various interests into a single body." "This," he concludes, "is what has given rise to the well-known principle of the balance of power."⁶¹ As Edward Keene has argued, modern political theory evolved through an analysis of the European state system, ignoring political relations in the colonized world; the notion of modern politics and the practice of a specifically European politics evolved together.⁶² The early modern legal theorists prepared the way for this future. They opened the question of global human society in new terms, and they made a first, tentative effort to pose the question of Christendom in political rather than religious language. But they retained the old spatial division of the world, elaborating different forms of international law that applied on each side of that boundary. In so doing, they helped found a newly secularized Europe in the ruins of Christendom.

This was precisely what Greville sought to resist, in his conviction that religion must guide politics. When Greville's Muslim priests describe the Ottoman church and state as being "like mutuall Voice, and *Eccho*, tide," the problem they articulate concerns the *direction* of this relationship: here power gives voice while religion merely echoes it (R4v). This is a double diagnosis, at once of an Ottoman state willing to sacrifice religious unity for political security and of a Jacobean state threatening to take the same path. England's retreat from the Protestant policy Sidney had favored appeared to Greville as a sacrifice of religion to security, what in the "Dedication" he described as "an idle, I fear deceiving, shadow of peace" (127). In James's treaty with Spain and in the possibility of toleration for Catholics, England seemed to be following the Ottoman example, giving up religious truth for a purely political peace.

Greville seeks to resist precisely what Bodin and Grotius promoted: a new distance between "religion" and "politics," a separation of religion from the forms of human political life. For the legal theorists, this analysis offered hope for an end to religious and domestic civil war: Bodin's theory of sovereignty sought to ensure political stability against the violence of various religious radicalisms, and Grotius's work suggested the possibility of reconceiving human society in political terms. But to Greville it appeared that religion was being sacrificed to a politics stripped of its relationship with the divine. In England, religion continued to provide the language for political opposition to monarchical

policy: by removing that prop, the continental legal theorists—in Greville's view—turned England into a political space organized exclusively by the demands of state power. What Jacobean politics threatened to reveal was precisely what Bodin had asserted: that there was no real difference between England and Turkey. For Bodin, this was a lesson in the true sources of political stability; for Greville, it suggested what he perceived as a dangerous political modernity, a forgetting of all traditional limits and guides for power.

Greville's turn from romance to a tragic and heavily theologized mode of political analysis can also be traced in his sonnet sequence, *Caelica*, whose poems reveal radical shifts of style and substance. The early poems imitate or even refer to Sidney's much more famous sequence, describing an unrequited love and the lover's difficult response to the condition of unrequitedness. Like Sidney, Greville struggles with unrequitedness, oscillating between idealization and anger. The first poem tells us that love, delight, virtue, and reason are contained only in the single figure of the beloved; but later, when the speaker's love has been refused or abandoned, this praise turns out to be conditional: "If *Cynthia* craue her Ring of me, / I blot her name out of the Tree."⁶³ From here, Greville slips into an often bitter satire on the inconstancy of women more reminiscent of Donne than Sidney. Sonnet 23 imagines a young Merlin laughing at the funeral of a child in fact fathered by the presiding priest, not the mourning husband. Sonnet 49 tells the story of "Scoggin," whose wife cuckolds him with a lord.

Greville also begins to reconceive unrequitedness from an emotional condition into a political metaphor. Sonnet 29 uses the history of Rome's fall from republic into empire to allegorize a woman's changeability in love; later in the sequence, the metaphorical relationship has reversed direction, so that the situation of an abandoned lover now evokes the circumstances of a factionalized politics. In Sonnet 76, fickleness has become a political as well as an emotional condition: "*Fortune*, art thou not forc'd sometimes to scorne? / That seest Ambition striue to change our state?" (2H4r). Unrequitedness perhaps begins to figure Elizabeth's "a little neglect" of Sidney and her subsequent rebuff to Greville's own efforts to follow Sidney's path, as well as Greville's marginalization from political life under James. We are in the territory, here, of the Elizabethan national romance, which figured political relations in amatory terms; but Greville does not easily inhabit the role of a devoted lover adoring his saint from afar. In *Caelica*, political conflict ruptures the elegant poses of Elizabethan courtiership.

The early sonnets are filled with conventional images of love as a kind of tyranny. By the end of the sequence, however, it is literal tyranny that is the issue. Sonnet 78 turns the topos of love at the mercy of fortune into a comment on the destructive effects of political favoritism:

And as the Bird in hand, with freedome lost,
 Serues for a stale, his fellowes to betray:
 So doe these Darlings rays'd at Princes cost
 Tempt man to throw his libertie away;
 And sacrifice Law, Church, all reall things
 To soare, not in his owne, but Eagles wings. (211v)

Sonnets 90 and 104 even read Ottoman politics in terms that recall the choruses of *Mustapha*. "The *Turkish* gouernment allowes no law," Greville writes in 90, so that "Mens liues and states depend on his behest," whereas in the Christian world power is hedged with legal prescriptions. But practice "proues it crooked as power lists to draw." There is no clear difference between Islamic and Christian tyrannies: "*Opinion bodies may to shadowes giue, / But no burnt Zone it is, where People liue.*"⁶⁴ Sonnet 104 traces a similar logic in the question of religion. "Two Sects there be in this earth opposite," Greville writes, "The one makes *Mahomet* a Deity, / A tyrant Tartar rais'd by Warre and Sleight." But Christian difference turns out to be mere show: "The other Sect of cloystered people is, / Lesse to the world, with which they seeme to warre, / And so in lesse things drawne to doe amisse." Neither can call itself the church of God: "if of God, both these haue but the name, / What mortall Idoll then, can equall Fame?" (2M2v).

In *Caelica*, Jacobean politics appears as an interrupted or unfinished romance: the pose of the abandoned lover becomes the formula for expressing an alienation from English political life, understood now under the figure of a wayward or fickle beloved. The result is a highjacking of the sonnet narrative, a turn from the affective dynamic of unrequitedness toward forms of political theory designed to diagnose a tragic, even fatal malady in English politics. Greville narrates the withdrawal of love from politics, suggesting that, in the wake of England's incomplete romance, "the political" as such has taken hold in England in new ways. England has been left a scene of political calculation, factionalism, and wandering affection in ways that evoke Ottoman politics.

In the introduction to this book, I argued that theories of romance are covert theories of modernity. One of the crucial terms of these

theories is secularity: we are told that romance should be read as a displaced theology, its hero a paler version of the divine, or we are offered a vision of romance as completely secularized, as marking a suspension of theology, an interruption of the providential narrative that orients us toward an imminent apocalypse. The question of romance opens up multiple, divergent readings of modernity and secularity.

In this sense, Greville's work can be read as an early theory of romance. His reading of Sidney and his commentary on Ottoman politics diagnose a world increasingly marked by efforts to separate divinity and human political life, efforts to constitute religion and politics as distinct spheres, distinct practices. Romance, for Greville, depends on the semi-autonomy of politics from the divine: the political world may diverge from divinity, but that divergence is always understood within the narrative of a return, a narrative that envisions a final reconciliation even as it describes wandering and error. In this sense, romance at once doubles the providential narrative and offers a way of thinking the relationship between the human and the divine, between politics and the sacred. When politics asserts its own autonomy, when the political appears in human life as such, the promise that romance makes to its readers is shattered: if romance represents for Greville the continuity of current events with a sacred story, then the irruption of the political marks the possibility of a permanent divergence, a permanent separation. Greville was finally unwilling to maintain the strategies of indirection, unwilling to accept the paradoxical and highly mediated relationship between the human and the sacred in Sidney's or even Spenser's romance, and so he turned away from it to the repeated effort, in *Mustapha*, *Caelica*, and the "Dedication," to write the failure of romance as the story of an emergent and debased modernity.

CHAPTER 4



“STRANGE COMMODITIES”

The early seventeenth century witnessed a crisis in England's relationship with the Islamic world. On the one hand, between the 1580s and the 1630s, the Levant Company controlled England's most important trade routes and was itself the site of the most explosive economic growth. On the other hand, James's antagonism toward the Islamic states and his efforts to reconstitute a unified Christendom—as I argued in chapter 2—left England's contacts with Islam a subject of real anxiety, heightening the contradiction between the demands of economic expansion and the fear of cultural contamination. In this chapter I will turn to Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*, a play deeply concerned with the forms of cross-cultural intimacy enabled by England's commerce with Islam, and a play that, like *The Tempest*, ends with a retreat from Africa to Italy. It is also a play that insistently links its representation of Islamic difference to ongoing Christian divisions. The effort to come to terms with a world of expanding commerce runs into contradiction in the complex religious geography of the seventeenth century. As with the legal theories discussed in chapter 3, *The Renegado* seeks to rethink forms of identity at a complexly contested cultural moment, and in the service of a religious politics very different from that articulated by Greville. The strain of this effort itself renders the play difficult to interpret: it seems at least possible that, over the course of the 1630s, it may have come to mean something quite different from what it meant when first performed in 1624. What is certainly true is that the play stages a conflict of interpretations—of Christianity, of the encounter with Islam, and of its own narrative—that reveals a struggle at the heart of Christian identity in the early modern period.

The play begins in a Tunisian marketplace where commercial and erotic liaisons become almost indistinguishable. The Venetian gentleman Vitelli and his servant Gazet, disguised as merchants, have unloaded their wares, "though brittle as a maydenhead at sixtene."¹ These sexually vulnerable wares turn out to be pictures of promiscuous women, "Bawdes, and common Curtezans in *Venice*" (1.1.13). Not only does Gazet figure wares as maidenheads, but he turns out literally to be selling sex as well. Buying and selling are always promiscuous; in *The Renegado*: the play continually sexualizes trade, drawing out the simultaneously mercantile and erotic associations of words like "commerce" and "commodity." When the Turkish princess Donusa—the sultan's niece—decides to visit the market, we easily translate her desire to window shop into a kind of voyeurism:

I feele a Virgins longing to descend
So far from mine owne greatnesse, as to be
Though not a buyer, yet a looker on
Their strange commodities. (1.2.114–17)

In the erotically charged space of the market, the promise of foreign goods incites "a Virgins longing," even if Donusa demurely declines a more active role in her desire.

The eroticism of the Tunisian market puts at risk forms of national, religious, and sexual identity. At the opening of the play, Gazet jokingly articulates the perverse flexibility such commerce encourages: "Liue I in *England, Spaine, France, Rome, Geneua,* / I am of that Countryes faith," he announces: "I would not be confin'd / In my beliefe" (1.1.36–37, 32–33). The travels of a merchant enable a wandering from any fixed identity. Asked by Vitelli whether he will "turne Turke" in Tunis, Gazet responds,

No! so I should loose
A Collop of that part my *Doll* inioyn'd mee
To bring home as she left it, tis her venture,
Nor dare I barter that commoditie. (1.1.38–41)

But in the course of events, Vitelli does consider turning Turk for "beauty, and reward," and he defends that decision by promising to use his newfound wealth "to redeeme a thousand slaues / From Turkish gallies, or at home to erect / Some pious worke" (2.4.135–37; 2.6.32–34). Erotic relations are themselves transactions, and put a price on what it means to be Christian or Muslim: as Francisco warns Vitelli, "They steere not the right course, nor

trafficke well, / That seeke a passage to reach Heauen, through Hell"
(2.6.45–46).

The market enables a fungibility of the self, and the humans who go there are themselves the "strange commodities" it promises: it is the site of an estrangement of the self, embodied perhaps above all in the sight of Vitelli, "strangely metamorphosed" into a Turk (2.6.20). But, more generally, what the market offers is precisely the "strange," the foreign, or the exotic. Strangeness is the source of pleasure, in this play, encouraging the wide-eyed wonder that Vitelli expresses when he arrives at the palace of the Turkish viceroy and Donusa's name gives him access to its secret spaces. "What a priuiledge her names beares!" he exclaims; "Tis wondrous strange!" (2.2.13). "I am rauish'd!" he later announces, on entering her rooms; "May I beleeeue my sences?" (2.3.12, 2.4.25). When Vitelli returns to the marketplace dressed as a Turk, Francisco is taken aback at the sight: "Tis strange," he says; "I am amazde" (2.6.35, 43). "I can tell you wonders," Vitelli promises (29). Wonder is one of the principal affective responses that romance solicits in its representations of the foreign or the strange.² In romance and those texts inflected by romance, such wonders often incite an eroticized longing, like the desire of Desdemona, listening to Othello's stories, or of Vitelli, entering Donusa's rooms. But the experience of the strange could also prompt anxiety, and a fear of loss or dissolution of the self: Vitelli's wonder represents a genuine, if naïve, longing, but Francisco's is shock, and the prelude to a denial of the attractions of difference. In *The Renegado*, wonder and the desire it incites are finally threats to be managed, as the play negotiates its way through the erotic complicities of the Tunisian market.

Massinger's play appropriates wonder from exotic marvels for another kind of magic. Wonder will be domesticated, purged of danger. The end of the play, like the beginning, revolves around an experience of wonder, but now that experience is concentrated in two scenes that center on the two central Christian sacraments, baptism and the eucharist. Wonder has been transferred from the marketplace of exotic desires to the central ritual moments of Christianity. In romance, and in the narratives of travel and encounter that take their cues from romance, wonder is produced by strange or unlikely occurrences; but it is also produced by things, by prodigies or marvels, by beautiful, intricate, or rare objects, by uncanny mechanical imitations of life, or by extravagant luxuries. *The Renegado* parodies this romance interest in beautiful things: in Gazet and Vitelli's stall, the wonderful object is a fraud, a pornographic fake designed to elicit an erotic desire far in excess of its real value. Similarly, in the viceroy's palace, Vitelli's

wonder is the deceptive prelude to a loss of identity. In the wake of this exposure of fraudulent marvels, the play relocates the site of a true wonder, inspired neither by objects in a marketplace nor by the splendor of a Turkish palace, but by the Christian sacraments. A critique of romance's fetishization of the marvelous object is accomplished by a reenchantment of the fundamental ritual moments of Christianity.

By taking control of the experience of wonder, *The Renegado* seeks to manage the attractions of the strange, to control the Tunisian marketplace as the site of forms of mingling that call into question clear religious, national, and racial differences. This is a kind of cultural work that looks toward an emergent global capitalism and the seductions thought to threaten English merchants abroad: as Henry Byam claimed in a sermon delivered on the re-conversion of a renegade in 1627, "many, and as I am informed, many hundreds, are Musselmans in Turkie, and Christians at home, doffing their religion, as they doe their clothes, and keeping a conscience for euery Harbor."³ The marketplace encourages a strategic flexibility of identity, a willingness to change with all changing environments. *The Renegado's* reorientation of wonder from exotic goods to Christian sacraments—a dis-orientation of wonder—targets at once the economic relations that linked Europe to Islam and made the Levant trades among the most lucrative of English trades, and the forms of sexual, cultural, and religious exchange encouraged by a cosmopolitan market.

As the play attempts to salve the anxieties of commerce with Islam, it also evokes ongoing conflicts within Christianity and even within English Protestantism. As *The Renegado* redirects wonder from strangeness to the sacraments, it focuses attention on the question of ritual in ways that could only be divisive, in the 1620s. Whatever Massinger's intention in writing the play in the spring of 1624 might have been, within a few years its emphasis on ritual as the true form of romance magic invited being read in the context of a Laudian agenda. The church reforms sponsored by William Laud and his followers signaled not only a revision of church practice but also a wide-reaching reconceptualization of global religious politics, a rethinking of England's relations with the Christian churches on the continent and with the Islamic world beyond. Laud's emphasis on ritual and on what he called the "beauty of holiness" enabled him to look beyond the endemic anti-Catholicism of the English church and to emphasize the broad lines of agreement between Protestants and Catholics. For those who remained loyal to the anti-Catholic culture of the English Church, the Laudian program looked like a betrayal, an effort to undo the still-incomplete work of reform, even a kind of crypto-Catholicism. The

effort to imagine the difference of the Islamic world opens up the problem of religious identities at a moment of real division within the English Church, and a moment when the continent was sliding into a religious war that, as Dudley Carleton wrote, threatened to "put all Christendom in combustion."⁴

When Donusa arrives at Vitelli's stall near the end of act one, she enters "*vayld*," despite which or perhaps because of which Vitelli immediately recognizes her as being "of ranke and qualitie," as a Turkish bystander puts it, and he adjusts his sales pitch accordingly: he silences Gazet's loud "What doe you lacke?" and expatiates on his goods in elaborate language (1.3.98–99). Like a good salesman, he knows his market, but his words, instead of attracting attention to the goods he has to offer, attract Donusa's attention to him. "Hee speakes well," she observes; "How mouingly could this fellow treat vpon / A worthy subiect, that findes such discourse / To grace a trifle" (1.3.107; 113; 126–28). For all of his "Poeticall" language, Vitelli is inflating the value of the goods he has to offer just as Gazet promised to do in the opening lines of the play, dressing up these "common Curtezans" as "The rarest beauties of the *Christian* world" (115, 137). In response, Donusa announces that she "could shew you one, to theirs / Not much inferior," and when Vitelli doubts her, she "*Vnvailes her selfe*" and asks "Can you match me this?" (140–42). With this gesture, Donusa offers her own face as a sight more beautiful than the sexy pictures Gazet and Vitelli are peddling: that is, she offers herself as yet more "brittle" wares. Her "Virgins longing" for a glimpse of the strange commodities the market offers leads her to make herself into a kind of strange commodity for Vitelli's gaze.

The moment Donusa unveils herself is also a moment of willing self-commodification: her desire almost seems to have been generated by the market, and her effort to act on that desire hints that she, too, is a kind of commodity, circulating in the marketplace and entering into potentially scandalous transactions with a Christian stranger. Her next act underscores the sense that this relationship is itself a kind of transaction: she breaks Vitelli's goods and then tells him to come to the palace to be reimbursed. When Vitelli arrives there in act two, he receives a payment that well exceeds the value of his cheap wares. Donusa offers him "baggs stuf full of our imperiall coyne" or "Iems for which the slavish *Indian* diues / To the bottome of the Maine" or "any honour in my giuft / (Which is vnbounded as the *Sultans* Power)" (2.4.82–89). Vitelli may not have come to Tunis seeking wealth, but his relations with Donusa generate the possibility of an

almost limitless profit, a radically unbalanced exchange that turns him into "a Royall Marchant" (94). Donusa's desire takes the form of a kind of commerce, but at the same time supplements the terms of any commercial exchange, enabling a fantasy of endless, easy accumulation.

The association of sex and commerce in this play is at once figurative and material, both in the profit Vitelli receives from Donusa's love and in the play's evocation of the stories of a thriving Mediterranean sex trade. The event that has set the plot in motion is Paulina's capture by the pirate and renegade Grimaldi, "the theefe that rauish't your fayre sister from you," as Francisco tells Vitelli, and "Sold to the viceroy [the] fayre *Christian* Virgin." Asambeg, the Turkish viceroy, now keeps her "Mewde vp in his *Serraglio*" (1.1.112, 115, 129). By his own admission, Grimaldi has been both buyer and seller in this trade. His first speech in the play—in response to Gazet's "What doe you lacke?"—is to demand "thy sister for a Whore," and he goes on to envisage an economy of piracy in which "rauish'd Virgins / To slauerie sold for Coyne . . . feede our riots," enabling the pirates when they "touch the shore to wallowe in / All sensuall pleasures" (1.3.39, 74–75, 52–53). Grimaldi's place in the Tunisian economy is clarified by two unnamed Turkish bystanders. The first wonders "how the Viceroy can indure / The insolence of this fellow," and is told that Asambeg "receiues profit / From the Prizes he brings in, and that excuses / What euer he commits" (1.3.94–96). The Ottoman Empire itself intrudes into the play only for a few moments, through agents whose speech is poised and gracious, with the elevated language of a state intent on conveying the legitimating signs of imperial "magnificence" (1.2.77): this is the empire as Henry Blount perceived it when he wrote that "he who would behold these times in their greatest glory, could not finde a better *scene* then *Turky*."⁵ But Tunis is at the margins of this imperial scene, well beyond the elaborate spaces and rituals of Ottoman court ceremonial—so well documented in European descriptions of the Ottoman court. In Massinger's *Tunis*, Ottoman authority makes awkward concessions to interlopers like Grimaldi, whose "Profit" buys off the representative of the state. This is a border zone, presided over by a marketplace where "a confluence of all nations / Are met together" (1.2.111–12).

Such "trafficke"—figured especially in the activities of pirates and renegades—was a serious anxiety in the seventeenth century. On March 16, 1627, at Minehead in Somersetshire, two sermons were delivered on the occasion of the reconciliation of a renegade, one by Henry Byam, the other by Edward Kellet. A note prefacing the published text of the sermons tells us that the renegade in question was an English sailor captured by "*Turkish Pyrats*, and made a slaue at *Argier*" until, "liuing

there in slauerie, by frailty and weakenesse, [he] forsooke the Christian Religion, and turned *Turke*, and liued so some yeares." During those years he may have taken up the line of work of his captors: he was "seruing in a *Turkish Ship*" when he was taken again, this time by "an *Englishman* of warre." In England, the religious authorities took hold of him, until "being made to vnderstand the grieuousnesse of his Apostacy, [he] was very penitent for the same, & desired to be reconciled to the Church." The text's phrasing—"being *made* to vnderstand"—leaves it quietly unclear whether the man would have felt the "grievousness" of his act without ecclesiastical intervention.

The omission is telling: the text is nervous about the possibility that the renegade does not regret renegadism, that he may even enjoy it. And yet that there is pleasure in renegadism is surely what is implied by the allusion to "frailty and weaknesse." The two sermons repeatedly warn their readers against the "baites and allurements," the "enticements of pleasure, and worldly preferment" that seduce Christians to turn Turk (F1v; F4r). Those who turn renegade in Africa, Kellet argues, are "such as are among vs, though not of vs, such as are to choose Religion; *Ambo-dexters*, *Nulli-fidians*, such *Amphibia*, as can liue, both on Land and Water" (F2r). North Africa enables the English amphibian to turn Turk, but turning Turk itself only brings out a desire latent in those who are "among vs" but not "of vs." Texts about renegadism invariably imagine it as part of an economy of illicit pleasure, one that brings out the hidden desires of wayward Englishmen. Of the renegades of Algiers, Thomas Dallam wrote that they took "pleasur in all sinfull actions," taking "moste delite" in selling Christian captives to "the Moors" as slaves.⁶ Another text describes those "who never knew any God, but their owne sensuall lusts, and pleasures" and "for preferment or wealth very voluntarily renounced their faith, and became *Renegadoes*."⁷ Even Vitelli considers conversion for "beauty, and reward." The seductions of renegadism reveal hidden fractures of identity, showing that not all who seem to be English or Christian in fact are.

The most notorious person who had abandoned himself to a life of pleasure in North Africa was undoubtedly John Ward, who rose from being a fisherman in Kent to become a wealthy pirate, first in Algiers and then in Tunis.⁸ Two pamphlets about Ward published in 1609 offer their readers the description of Ward's life in order to expose the scandal of English renegades seduced by the promise of wealth and sexual license. One includes a letter sent from the masters of the *Charity* and *Pearl* of London to the owners of their ships, recounting how those ships were assaulted by pirates and the greater part of the

goods taken by three ships who commanded them to stop in the name of “the great Turke.”⁹ “Yet for certaine it prooued,” they write, “that all the Saylers and Sea faring men within these three ships . . . were all of them *Englishmen*, . . . most of them knowen to our Master” (D2v). Mediterranean piracy turns out to be an affair between friends. But this recognition of shared nationality—“our owne Countrymen,” as the masters write (E1v)—does not guarantee any degree of trust or good treatment. “The deuill in the habbit of a Turke,” the two masters write, “would not haue vsed vs worse” (E2r). The history of Ward’s life prefaces a text that exposes a world in which the ties of religion, race, and nationality are utterly abrogated.

Andrew Barker’s account of Ward similarly begins by describing his own capture by a “Turkish” ship, and his discovery that its “*Masters & Pilates*, are all Englishmen, not onely *Pirates*, but mearely reprobates”—“without the help of which English, the Turks by no means could haue gouerned” their ships, “through their vnskilfulnes and insufficiencie in the art of *Nauigation*.” But the Turks may not need their English instructors much longer, since “of late to my wofull experience, I can witnes, they haue beene so readied by the instruction of our apostate countrimen” (A2r). English renegadism reveals the degeneracy of these “reprobates,” and yet paradoxically also proves the superior capacities of the English, represented by the navigational techniques accumulated in the early history of English commercial expansion. The renegades transgress against Englishness, and yet in that transgression reveal English power. In the same way, Barker both admires and reviles Ward, denouncing him as an apostate and yet admiring him as a perverse example of English masculine strength: “if his *actions* were as *honest* as his *valour* is *honorable*,” Barker laments, “his *deeds* might be dignified in the *Chronicles* with the worthiest” (C1v). Piracy turns out to depend on the same kinds of skill and knowledge that were the human capital of English empire-building in the seventeenth century.

In Barker’s *Relation*, Ward’s life as an “apostata” (A3r) is represented above all as a kind of prodigious enjoyment. “Unlawfully are their goods got, and more vngodly are they consumed,” Barker writes: “Nay sinne is growen to that *ranknesse* amongst them, through the fatnesse of *Concupiscence* and *Couetousnesse*, that the *Iewes* hire out their *off-spring* to them as we doe *horses*, either by the *day* or by the *weeke*.” This pleasure Barker calls “their *Sodomie*,” a reference that signifies on a number of levels (C2r). On the one hand, it suggests recurrent accusations of Turkish sodomy as one of the illicit pleasures seducing renegades into conversion: Henry Blount described the

"*Catamites*" of the Turkish pashas,

which are their serious loves; for their Wives are used (as the *Turkes* themselves told me) but to dresse their meat, to Laundresse, and for reputation; The Boyes likely of twelue, or fourteene yeares old, some of them not above nine, or ten, are usually clad in *Velvet*, or *Scarlet*, with guilt *Symitar*s, and bravely mounted, with *sumptuous furniture*. (B4v)

On the other hand, the accusation of sodomy, as Patricia Parker has argued, also opens onto a series of other, metaphorical forms of "preposterous" desire, as John Bale implies in a marginal note to his *Actes of English Votaries*: "Turkes religious buggers to this present day."¹⁰ The charge of "*religious* buggery" makes sodomy into the sign of a spiritual as well as erotic deviance, so that "backsliding" becomes a literal exposing of the backside. It is an association notoriously dramatized in Robert Daborne's play about Ward, in which Ward's conversion and circumcision are turned into a sodomitical joke.¹¹ In a sense, both the homoerotic and the heteroerotic pleasures offered as an enticement to renegadism—Barker's phrase is "*off-spring*," deliberately effacing the signs of gender in the objects of Ward's desire—can be called kinds of sodomy, in that both seduce the male subject into a "preposterous" turning.

The seductive but preposterous pleasures of conversion not only allure Christians to turn Turk but also threaten to commodify all forms of religious, national, and sexual identity. The slave market thus becomes an exemplary site for imagining the "commerce" of Christians and Muslims. Accounts of the Ottoman world almost obsessively document the buying and selling of Christian slaves, while remaining quiet about identical markets operating in places like Malta as well as about the growing Atlantic slave trade. "We may well despaire of words to vtter this misery, and to describe this Mart of Hell," Samuel Purchas writes:

if any bee sicke by the way, driuen on as long as they can goe, and when their feet faile, laid ouer a horse, like as butchers deale with small cattle, and if thy [sic] die, left for a prey to the fowles and beasts: the places of their abode by the way, filled with cryes of younglings of both sexes, abused to vnnaturall lust. In the markets they are stripped, viewed, and (modestie forbids to speake, O Image of God thus abased!) openly in the secretest parts handled, bee they male or female.¹²

But this description is introduced by the very different spectacle of a willing sale of oneself: many, Purchas writes, are "peruerted and bewitched" so that they "voluntarily offer themselves to Apostasie";

others are distracted by “hopes, feares, griefes, despaires, importunities”; still others are taken in by “that vizer of vertue in the Turkish gravity, sobriety, bodily purity, and spirituall zeale.” And so they “sell to the Deuill their soules.” This is the “Mart of Hell,” and the description of the slave market appears only at this point, as if it were an image of that other, metaphorical selling of oneself.

These accounts of piracy and the slave market perform a double cultural work. On the one hand, they offer an anxious image of the Mediterranean contact zone between Christendom and Islam. On the other hand, they also focus anxieties about the expanding global economy. Depictions of the economy of piracy and slavery evoke a concern about an international market that was enabling forms of travel and contact, eroding old boundaries and encouraging new cosmopolitanisms. For Byam, certainly, the problem of piracy becomes an entry to problems of trade more generally, as his remark about those who “keep a conscience for every Harbor” suggests. When Samuel Purchas describes the slave markets of the Ottoman world, he acknowledges the suffering of the captives brought there, but the way he introduces that scene suggests that the market represents not so much the problem of violent captivity but of a willing sale of oneself, a self-commodification.

A similar image of willing slavery dominates the notorious passage on the universality of “merchandizing” in John Wheeler’s *A Treatise of Commerce*: “all thinges come into Commerce, and passe into traffique,” Wheeler asserts, passing through a list of commodified things to the commodification of work and of language, and finally concluding with the claim that “there are some found so subtill and cunning merchants, that they perswade and induce men to suffer themselves to bee bought and sold, and we haue seene in our time enow, and too many which haue made merchandise of mens soules.”¹³ The treatise is a defense of the Merchant Adventurers, and yet Wheeler’s account of the naturalness of commerce also hints at some anxiety about where this impulse to buy and sell can lead, in the image of the persuasive merchant who can convince people to sell both their bodies and their souls. His words suggest that the slave market could be the emblem of an economic critique, one that registers how, in the act of buying and selling, the people doing the buying and selling in a sense turn themselves into “strange commodities”: Wheeler suggests, that is, that underneath the outrage over the specific history of the Ottoman practice of slavery lies a deeper anxiety about the effects of a global market economy, of

which the economy of piracy and slavery may be not the illegitimate antithesis but the secret truth.

In *The Renegado*, the scenes in the Tunisian marketplace focus anxiety about "commerce" in all of its senses, including both the expanding networks of global trade and the forms of cross-cultural contact fostered by those networks. The events that lead us to that opening scene in the marketplace evoke the linked narratives of piracy, slavery, and renegadism that define seventeenth-century accounts of North Africa: the story of Paulina held hostage by Asambeg, himself according to Grimaldi the keeper of "Whores / And Catamites" (2.5.11–12); the story of Vitelli, who comes to Tunis to rescue Paulina but then falls in love with the sultan's niece; and the story of the pirate Grimaldi, beginning like the Ward of Daborne's play to regret his life of lust and violence. *The Renegado's* several narratives about the "commerce" of Turks and Italians in Tunis surely represent a displacement of anxieties about contemporary forms of English contact with the Islamic world, and the play's evident popularity can in part be ascribed to its compact rehearsal of various discourses about "commerce" in the Mediterranean world.

But in Massinger's play, threats to religious, national, and racial identity are at once elicited and assuaged by the play's redemptive plot: all are saved, even Grimaldi, and all finally escape Tunis and return to Italy. Samuel Purchas ascribed a generic form to his narrative of sexual slavery and willing self-commodification in the Ottoman market, calling it "this Tragedie" (2F2r). In its own literary form, Massinger's play resembles another book, *The Famous and Wonderful Recoverie of a Ship of Bristoll* (London, 1622), in which a sailor by the name of John Rawlins narrates his capture and eventual escape from the hands of English renegades, men who for "sensuall lusts" or "preferment" have turned Turk and become "*Renegadoes*" (B2r). Rawlins calls these men "*English Turkes*," a seemingly paradoxical phrase that evokes the sense of an identity so lost or compromised that it can be expressed only in the form of a contradiction (B3r). These compromised figures suggest the future that may await Rawlins and the other sailors; but the story Rawlins has to tell is one of redemption, both from the violence of slavery and from the sin of turning Turk: "make vse of it," he writes of his book; "it teacheth the acknowledgment of a powerfull, prouident, and mercifull God, who will be knowne in his wonders" (E3r). His account shows God's "miraculous preseruacion of his seruants" (E2v), and Rawlins is nervous that we understand that it is both strange and true: "it is only the truth of the storie you are amazed at, making

doubt, whether your beleefe of the same may be bestowed to your owne credit," he writes, assuring us that "the actors in this *Comick Tragedie* are most of them aliue; the *Turkes* are in prison; the ship is to be seene, and *Rawlins* himselfe dare iustifie the matter" (E3r).

Massinger's play has several points of contact with this "*Comick Tragedie*." Like Rawlins, Massinger dramatizes the "wonders" of a "miraculous preservation." The title-page of the play identifies it as "A Tragæcomedie," a genre with a close relationship to romance, perhaps above all in its fascination with stories of "wonderfull recoverie," stories of exile and restoration whose improbability and contrivance—while easily ridiculed—solicit a kind of wonder; the plot of a brother and sister separated and reunited, certainly, is a staple of romance, and critical commentary has repeatedly emphasized the "romantic cast" of Massinger's work in general.¹⁴

In *The Renegado*, as in Rawlins's tract, wonder is finally located not in strange adventures or exotic places but in the providential care of a beneficent God, manifested in the arc of the narrative itself. But in *The Renegado*, unlike in Rawlins, providence has a human agent: Francisco, Vitelli's spiritual advisor and a Jesuit, who engineers the conclusions of both of the play's main plots. One of the most striking and under-examined facts about *The Renegado* is that its miraculous conversions are explicitly conversions not simply to Christianity but to Catholicism, performed by a Jesuit priest, and yet these Catholics and even the Jesuit come in for no overt anti-Catholic attack. This peculiar fact about the play provides an important clue to understanding its politics. The plotting of a Jesuit could hardly have been a matter for English audiences to accept quietly. Regularly accused of infiltrating England to find converts, of conspiring to assassinate English monarchs, and of justifying Catholic rebellion, the Jesuits were without question the most vilified figures of supposed Catholic superstition, impiety, and criminality. An order created in the Catholic Reformation, they operated in the forefront of the assault on the Protestant heresy. Massinger's apparent failure to engage anti-Catholic sentiment is still more striking when we recognize that *The Renegado* was first performed at the beginning of a massive resurgence of anti-Catholic and anti-Jesuit polemic: the play was licensed for the stage on April 17, 1624, and that year and the following year saw the publication of a flood of anti-Catholic tracts, as part of what Thomas Cogswell has called the "blessed revolution."¹⁵

In the early 1620s, James was again seeking to match his son Charles with the Infanta of Spain, an alliance that, he believed, could restore peace to a continent being plunged into religious war by the conflict that began when James's son-in-law accepted the crown of a Bohemia in revolt against the Habsburgs.¹⁶ Negotiations with Spain

hinged on the question of toleration for English Catholics, and this made the Spanish Match profoundly antithetical to the sensibilities of forward Protestants. A marriage between Charles and the Infanta would mean not only a Catholic queen but also a legal toleration for Catholicism across the nation, perhaps even a Catholic succession. This issue had ended the first set of negotiations in 1618, but in 1622, given the progress of the war on the continent, James was willing to offer more concessions. He suspended the penal codes against Catholics and enforced a *de facto* toleration, while restricting Protestant preaching and enforcing a ban on anti-Catholic rhetoric. As Walter Yonge wrote in his diary, "Papists shall have a toleration here in England, and the Protestant ministers shall preach but once a Sabbath."¹⁷

When negotiations showed no signs of progress, Prince Charles and Buckingham made their way to Madrid in what seems to have been an effort to force the question once and for all. In October 1623, they returned in disgust, convinced that the Spanish had no intention of finalizing the marriage. Once back in England they set out to engineer one of the most rapid reversals in early seventeenth-century politics, forming a coalition with Parliament dedicated to the project of maneuvering James into a war he did not want. One result of this reversal was the flood of anti-Catholic literature that filled London's bookstalls from the end of 1623.¹⁸ On April 6, 1624, James announced the failure of the negotiations with Spain; on April 23 he signed the Petition of Religion, which included among its provisions the clause that no concessions to Catholics be made part of any future marriage treaty. In between these dates, as James hesitated and as rumors circulated that he was still looking for a way to reconcile himself with Spain, Henry Herbert licensed *The Renegado* for the stage.

The outlines of Massinger's play may hint at these events: the arrival of Gazet and Vitelli in Tunis, disguised, recalls Charles and Buckingham's disguised escapes to and from Spain, and the danger of Vitelli's being seduced into conversion and marriage with a woman of another religion surely evokes the danger of a Catholic match. In April 1624, Donusa's conversion and the final escape from Tunis invite being interpreted as a rewriting of the events of the summer and fall of 1623. Such a reading of the play requires a full allegorical displacement of its terms of difference, reading Islam as a stand-in for Catholicism and requiring us to forget the actual Catholicism of the main characters; but Protestant readers in England were equipped to make such substitutions by long-standing polemics conflating Islam and Catholicism. Moreover, at this fraught moment, the London stages were clearly seeking to intervene into the course of events: that summer, Middleton's *A Game at Chesse* would have its notorious

nine-day run, and, according to Jerzy Limon, through the spring and summer the new faction around Charles and Buckingham was actively using the theater to promote its agenda.¹⁹

In April 1624, moreover, there was a new reason to fear a Catholic marriage, this time not to the Spanish Infanta but to Henrietta Maria of France. In February, Henry Rich arrived in Paris to open discussions about such a match and quickly became confident of French interest. By early April rumors about the negotiations were circulating: sometime that month, William Bishop wrote to Louis XIII expressing “the pleasure and hope which we have conceived in the alliance of our Prince with Madame your sister.” The Petition of Religion, Roger Lockyer argues, was itself intended to hamper the negotiations by preventing the French from imposing the same conditions the Spanish had.²⁰ The “blessed revolution” was barely under way and already a new Catholic marriage had appeared on the horizon.

In the ambiguous moment of spring 1624, the question of anti-Catholicism was bound up with alternate visions for English policy and contested understandings of English identity. What I want to focus on, however, is not just how *The Renegado* might have been decoded by a politically astute theatergoer in the spring of 1624: rather, I want to suggest that, whatever Massinger had in mind at that moment, his play later came to bear a significantly different but equally urgent set of meanings. Unlike *A Game at Chesse*—which was suppressed after its nine days’ run—*The Renegado* remained in repertory for some time. It appears among the plays that Christopher Beeston protected for the exclusive use of his company in 1639, and so presumably remained a valuable property fifteen years after its first performance.²¹ After 1630, it was also circulating in print. If we want to look for the cultural and political developments in which this play participated, we should look beyond the immediate context of April 1624, to the later 1620s and 1630s.

In the 1620s and 1630s, anti-Catholicism was no longer the ubiquitous rhetoric of English Protestantism. Anti-Catholic sentiments were voiced as powerfully as ever, but that rhetoric began to be associated with a factional group within the English Church, the Calvinists and forward Protestants for whom the crucial axis of religious difference lay between England and Rome. At the same time, a new group of divines were increasingly calling on the English to emphasize the continuities between Protestantism and Catholicism. They demanded a new spirit of moderation in handling doctrinal questions and even altogether minimized the importance of doctrine in defining Christian identity, in favor of a new emphasis on faith in Christ and belief in the

two sacraments shared by Catholics and Protestants alike, baptism and communion.²²

These were the hallmarks of a movement in the English Church that looked back to figures like Hooker and Whitgift—and, in the opinion of many, to the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius—but was most identified in England with William Laud.²³ One of the central issues distinguishing Laudians from the Calvinists they opposed was the question of the relationship between the Protestant and Catholic churches. On this hinged a whole vision of Christian identity, from the shape of Christendom to the nature of salvation. Calvinism envisioned salvation available to an elect few, and drastically restricted the true but "invisible" Christian church to include only those elect. Thus Matthew Sutcliff asserted in 1606 that "*Popery is an heathenish and idolatrous religion*," and in his *De Tyrropapismo* argued that Catholicism was Islam by another name.²⁴

The Laudians condemned such claims on two grounds. First, they argued that moderation was more likely to persuade than vituperative rhetoric and that controversy only encouraged defections from the church. Second, they argued that the Roman church was a true Christian church if not a particularly good one, that salvation could be obtained there as well as in the English church, and that the English and Roman churches shared a substantial part of their beliefs, even the greater part. Richard Montagu, in a tract of 1625 defending himself against charges of crypto-Catholicism, argued that he was not departing from the doctrines of the English church but that the radical Protestants were fostering onto that church, "like Bastards upon the Parish," "Strange Determinations, Sabbatarian Paradoxes, and Apocalyptically Frensies."²⁵ Against these "*Classicall Puritans*" Montagu argued that English and Catholic belief were grounded on shared principles: "I am absolutely perswaded," he wrote, "that the Church of *Rome* is a *true*, though not a *sound* Church of CHRIST." In this he was following that earlier anti-puritan, Archbishop Whitgift, who insisted that "The Church of *Rome* is not as the Assemblies of *Turks*, *Jews*, and *Painims*."²⁶

As they narrowed the space between Protestant and Catholic belief, the Laudians exaggerated the difference between Christianity and Islam. On the continent, Hugo Grotius—an avowed Arminian who repeatedly expressed his admiration for Laud—had already exploited the specter of Islam in a tract urging Christian reconciliation: writing of Meletius Pagas, a Greek patriarch of Alexandria, Grotius claimed that he "could not refrain from tears when execrating our dissensions, . . . and he used to beg us at long last to turn our eyes, made fierce by contemplating one

another, on the Turks and the rabble of barbaric nations.”²⁷ In England, William Page similarly argued that the violence of doctrinal conflict should be directed against “the common enemy of the Christian name”: “What a glorious sight would it be,” he asks, “to see the red Crosse once againe advanced as it was in the daies of *Constantine*? . . . And set aside . . . this private interest of Protestant, and Papist, and Grecian, and Lutheran, and Calvinist, and Arminian, and Socinian.”²⁸ Religious hatred was to be redirected toward its proper object.

In 1625, Montagu condemned the divisions caused by confessional conflict, lamenting that there were some who, out of a “furious zeale without discretion,” “proceed so farre . . . as to professe, that *Turks* and *Turcisme* is to be preferred before, and rather embraced than *Papists* and *Popery*.”²⁹ Montagu discovered this misdirected zeal among both Protestants and Catholics. “The Roman Confessionists at this day,” he wrote, “doe not so extremely hate a Turke, a Jew, a Pagan, as they doe a Protestant; the one they will burne, but pity and commiserate the other.” The Protestant, similarly, “doth in his charity and affection preferre a Mahometan before him . . . It is an ordinary Apothegme, in some mens mouthes, (as it was once a cognizance in the Dutch mens caps) *Better a Turk then a Papist*, though the Papist believes all the Articles of the Creed.”³⁰ The claim that the Dutch armies had carried flags bearing the crescent moon and the motto “Sooner Turks than Papists” was already, by the time Montagu wrote, a commonplace of irenic and anti-puritan sentiment.³¹ On the second day of the Hampton Court Conference, the bishop of London heatedly interrupted a discussion of the Thirty-Nine Articles in order to accuse the schismatics, as he called them, of believing “that *we ought rather to conforme our selues in orders and Ceremonies to the fashio[n] of the Turkes, then to the Papistes*,” and noting that “contrary to the orders of the Vniuersities, they appeared before his Maiestie, in *Turky* gownes, not in their Scholastical habites.”³² The ascetic gowns of the puritan divines become the sign of an inward Islamicization, and the Dutch war of resistance against Spain becomes evidence not of the vigorous defense of Protestantism but of a dangerous schismatic tendency.

In some ways, Laudian appeals to crusade represented an intensification of a Jacobean political rhetoric that used the specter of a Turkish enemy to justify reconciliation with the Catholic powers—as I discussed in chapter 2. In the last years of James’s reign, when the question of reconciliation was made still more urgent by the problem of the Palatinate and by James’s controversial efforts to sponsor the Spanish Match, the question of war against the “Turks” resurfaced as

both rhetoric and practice. In a document of March 23, 1617, Francis Bacon included among the "noble and excellent effects" of the Spanish Match the possibility that it might "be a beginning and seed . . . of a holy war against the Turk." In 1622, after he was debarred from office and from parliament, Bacon produced, in English and Latin, a fragmentary text titled "An advertisement touching an holy warre," perhaps as a bid to regain James's favor by addressing a favorite topic.³³

James's hostility to "Barbary" piracy may itself have been shaped by the desire to produce a cooperative sphere of Anglo-Spanish foreign policy. According to Godfrey Fisher, James and his court showed a determination to accept at face value even Madrid's most dubious claims about the piratical activities of the navies of Algiers and Tunis in the Mediterranean.³⁴ In 1620, Robert Mansell was dispatched at the head of a fleet charged with rooting out piracy from Algiers. This was intended to have been a cooperative effort, and between 1617 and 1620 James and his court negotiated in the hopes of establishing a broad international coalition financing a fleet composed of English, Dutch, and Spanish ships. When John Digby was sent to Spain to negotiate for the Spanish Match, he was also empowered to negotiate for a league against the Algerians: diplomatically, reconciliation with Spain and war with "Turks" and "Moors" went hand in hand. But the international situation in those years made mutual trust precarious, and in July of 1617 Count Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador in London, warned his government that the proposed expedition against Algiers was a front for an assault on Genoa or the Papal States.³⁵ The English repeatedly but unsuccessfully tried to assuage Spanish fears.³⁶ At the same time, the possibility of increased intimacy between England and Spain triggered fears in England. The character representing Gondomar in Middleton's *A Game at Chesse*—the Black Knight—brags of the Algiers expedition as one of his diplomatic feats: "Was it not [I] procured a gallant fleete, / From the white Kingdom to secure our coasts, / 'Gainst th'infidell Pyrats, vnder pretext / Of more necessit[ous] expedition?"³⁷ For Middleton, Mansell's fleet seemed to be doing Spain's dirty work for it.

In refusing anti-Catholicism, the Laudians also refused the long-standing Protestant assertion that the pope was antichrist. Montagu's *Apello Cesarem* contains a sustained attack on the doctrine—loudly asserted by Calvinists just the year before—of the papal antichrist. Montagu does not deny that the pope is "*an Antichrist*," but he refuses to take the further step of believing that the pope is "*THAT Antichrist*," "THE MAN OF SINNE, THE SONNE OF PERDITION" (T4v; V1r; V2r).

Debating the same point that had exercised Foxe fifty years earlier, Montagu remains skeptical of any direct identification of antichrist: he argues the impossibility of certain knowledge, and insists that such inconclusive debates should not disturb the peace of the church. At the same time, however, Montagu also repeatedly asserts that, if we are to choose an antichrist, the "Turk" is by far the most likely candidate (V3r, X1r-v). The broad lines of Christian consensus are secured by emphasizing the otherness of the Turks.

This argument requires that a radical Protestant sense of Christian identity be rejected as well: if Montagu insists on Islam as a form of radical exteriority in effect defining the borders of "the Christian," he also hints at a kind of collusion between puritans and "Turks" by arguing that puritan anti-Catholicism misdirects religious violence against Christian enemies. When Henry Byam and Edward Kellet preached on the subject of renegadism in 1627, they advanced precisely this mode of anti-puritan polemic: they used the occasion to attack Calvinist theology, to condemn the puritans of breaking the peace, and to lament the ongoing religious war on the continent. The complicated religious politics of that moment in Minehead can perhaps be registered when we realize that the renegade who is the subject of these sermons was admitted into the church "by the authority of the Lord Bishop of that Dioces," as the prefatory note tells us—that is, by Laud, who was bishop of Bath and Wells from 1626 to 1628. Laud took a direct interest in the problem of renegadism, and in 1637 he and Joseph Hall co-wrote the first penitential form for the reconciliation of a renegade.³⁸ The "Form of Penance and Reconciliation of a Renegado" describes an elaborate series of rituals that take place over several weeks, involving ceremonial clothes, kneeling before the altar, and set theatrical speeches. The "Form" embodies not only an anxiety about how to bring the renegade back into the community of the faithful but also an emphasis on ceremonial spaces and ritual performances that to forward Protestants must have seemed to blur the lines between Catholicism and Protestantism.

When Byam and Kellet preached at Minehead ten years earlier, no such elaborate ritual was yet imagined. Nevertheless, their sermons interpret the significance of this re-conversion in clearly Laudian terms. In both sermons, anxiety about new forms of commerce with Islam secures the idea of an integral Christendom, defined against the betrayals of renegades abroad and puritans at home. When Kellet preaches against "certaine halfe-fac'd Christians," "Christian-Iewes or Iewish-Christians, [who] would ioyne *Moses* and *Christ*," he glances both at an Islam that is, in his account, concocted out of a blend of

Judaic practices and Christian heresies, and at those "puritans" and Protestant radicals who showed a respect for the Mosaic dispensation mistrusted by their conformist enemies.³⁹ Byam both attacks puritans and argues a series of standard Laudian points, claiming that good works must supplement faith, that doctrinal controversy alienates people from the church, and that repentance is not accomplished by inward contrition alone. His text is Revelation 2:4–5: "*Thou hast left thy first loue. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and doe thy first workes*" (H2r). This has clear relevance for the reconciliation of a renegade, but it also enables Byam to insist on a two-part process of redemption, including both repentance and the performance of "workes." The "common diuision of Repentance" in the English church includes "*Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction,*" but "many thinke it more common then safe, and in detestation of Auricular confession, . . . they cannot once endure the name of Confession or Satisfaction" (K2r–K3r). Byam is aware that some will accuse him of crypto-Catholicism for his theology: "Wee haue fed our Auditory so long with *Sola fides*," he writes, that "if any be so tender hearted, as to relieue, restore, compassionate his brother's misery; some shall vntruely iudge him for no true Christian; and other new reformers shall neere challenge him of *old Religion*" (H2v). His explicit target throughout is one of the grandfathers of the puritan cause, Cartwright (K3r–K4v). "This is he who thinkes it more safe," Byam writes, "for vs to conformance our indifferent Ceremonies to the Turkes, which are a farre off, than to the Papists, which are so neere" (K4v).

At this point we can see more clearly the rhetorical utility of the Turks in Byam's polemic. Having rehearsed the standard Christian accusations against Muhammad, Byam goes on to identify "the Turke" as antichrist. As in Montagu—Byam cites the *Apello Casarem* (K1r)—this claim is directed against the rhetoric of the papal antichrist. Only "the Turke" is the "Common enimie" of Christendom, even though the Christian nations still pursue "those wofull warres of ours . . . where one Member wounds another to the hazard of the whole body" (K1r–v). "O might I liue to see the time," Byam laments, "when our *Roberts, Godfreies, Baldwins* would set foote in stirrop againe!" (K1v). The fantasy of crusade is directed against both the Turkish "infidel" and those in England who deny the unity of all Christian churches.

This Laudian context suggests an explanation for *The Renegado's* apparent endorsement of Francisco's machinations. As the play circulated in the stage repertory and in print through the later 1620s and 1630s, it would almost certainly have been read as evoking a Laudian understanding of global religious politics. The deliberate refusal of

anti-Catholicism was one of the most controversial elements of the Laudian program, one that provoked the charge Montagu called “negative popery.”⁴⁰ Montagu claimed that he was being called a crypto-Catholic because he endorsed points of Catholic theology without any balancing condemnation of its errors. “Negative popery” may provide a strategy for reading *The Renegado*. The play foregrounds the Catholicism of its characters, tempting a Protestant audience to derision or dismissal. But there is no voice in the play for articulating this critique: the reader is left to decide how to respond, with little explicit guidance. By emphasizing that the play’s resolution is achieved through “jesuitical” manipulation, Massinger forces his audience to confront the problem of religious difference directly.

Massinger’s play is so pervaded by what seem to be terms of Catholic devotion that his nineteenth-century editor William Gifford became convinced that Massinger was himself a Catholic: “The language and ideas of this play,” Gifford wrote of *The Renegado*, “are strictly Catholic.”⁴¹ His confident assessment of the play’s religious commitments produced, among the critics and biographers whose work was shaped by his edition, a line of speculation about the playwright’s faith. Gifford himself, in the general introduction to his edition, expanded his assertion about the play into an assertion about the playwright, claiming that “a close and repeated perusal of Massinger’s work has convinced me that he was a Catholic,” and that *The Virgin Martyr*, *The Renegado*, and *The Maid of Honour* all show “innumerable proofs” of the religious faith of their author.⁴²

I do not intend to pursue a reassessment of Massinger’s religious beliefs, because I have no confidence that his plays can be read as cryptic autobiographies or personal confessions. And yet, Gifford is right to observe that *The Renegado* repeatedly calls attention to the Catholicism of its central characters.⁴³ For example, we are told that in her captivity Paulina is protected by a kind of magic: as Francisco says to Vitelli,

I oft haue tould you
Of a Relique that I gaue her, which has power
(If we may credit holy mens traditions)
To keepe the owner free from violence. (1.1.146–49)

This is more than a charm or talisman of the kind familiar from romance. It is specifically called a “Relique,” it has been given to Paulina by Francisco, and its powers are described in “holy mens traditions,” a phrase that recalls at once the conventional romance

figure of the hermit, itself derivative of Catholic forms of self-mortification and devotion, and the Catholic claim to religious truth embodied in a continuous tradition.

We are not allowed to forget this oddly Catholic charm. Asambeg himself seems to believe in its efficacy. "Rauish her I dare not," he says as he locks her up: "The magique that she weares about her necke, / I thinke defends her" (2.5.161–63). The relic's magic is associated with the magic of female chastity embodied in Paulina herself. Earlier in the same scene Asambeg marvels at the transformation he has undergone, now that he has seen Paulina. "Stout men quake at my frownes," he asserts, "and in returne / I tremble at her softnesse" (2.5.108–09). There is something magical, either in Paulina's beauty or in the relic she wears: "Base *Grimaldi* / But only nam'd *Paulina*, and the charme / Had almost chok'd my fury ere I could / Pronounce his sentence," Asambeg storms, and the double meaning of that word "charm" glances at both at Paulina's personal charms and at the charm she wears (2.5.109–12). In act five, Paulina offers Francisco the story of her fortunes: "My chastity preseru'd by miracle, / Or your deuotions for me" (5.2.69–70). Wonders are evidently not ceased; rather, they linger in forms of devotion that, like Paulina's "Relique," suggests what for forward Protestants must have seemed a Catholic investment in magical objects.

But Paulina's charm is not the only element of *The Renegado* that invites a Catholic reading. The resolution of both major plots of the play depends on a sacramental rite figured as marvelous. This emphasis on the wonder of the sacraments evokes an investment in Christian unity secured through ritual acts, a kind of ritual policing of the borders of the Christian body politic that would have looked Laudian or even crypto-Catholic to any committed Calvinist. The re-conversion of the renegade Grimaldi begins by recalling the most egregious of his crimes, one for which he feels he can never be forgiven. "Vpon a solemne day when the whole City / Ioyn'd in deuotion, and with barefoote steps / Pass'd to S. *Markes*," we are told, "when all men else" were crying and repenting their past sins, Grimaldi,

Whether in scorne of those so pious rites
He had no feeling of, or else drawne to it
Out of a wanton irreligious madnesse,
(I know not which) ranne to the holy man,
As he was doing of the work of grace,
And snatching form his hands the sanctifide meanes
Dash'd it vpon the paument. (4.1.19–33)

This is an evidently Catholic ceremony, centering on “the work of grace,” that is, the elevation of the host, the “sanctifide meanes.” That phrase implies a theology that—like both Catholicism and Laudianism—insists on the necessity of rituals, sacraments, sacred spaces, and sacred priests, for mediating the divine to the community of the faithful. It is a theology directly opposed to a Calvinist insistence that faith alone saves. At the same time, Grimaldi’s otherwise inexplicable act clearly recalls puritan iconoclastic violence, itself often directed at the veneration of the host. The elevation of the host appears as the model of Catholic idolatry on the title page of Foxe’s *Actes and Monumentes*; Grimaldi’s attack on the host is anticipated—and virtually illustrated—by a woodcut in Anthony Munday’s *The English Romaine Lyfe* illustrating a moment of Protestant iconoclastic zeal directed against the eucharist: according to Munday, an Englishman in Rome stormed into St. Paul’s during Mass, dashed the consecrated wine to the ground, and tried to snatch the host, before he was pulled down by the crowd.⁴⁴

This act haunts Grimaldi more than any of his other crimes. He raves, cannot bear mention of “The Church, or the high Altar,” and is tormented with “a strong beleefe he cannot receaue pardon / For this fowle fact, but from his hands against whom / It was committed” (4.1.140–42). At this point Francisco approaches, dressed “*in a Cope like a Bishop*”: if Grimaldi’s crime resembles radical Protestant iconoclastic violence, the figure who comes to expiate that crime—a Jesuit in a bishop’s cope—is a strangely overdetermined symbol of Counter-Reformation Catholicism. But Grimaldi recognizes or thinks he recognizes this figure:

in this reuerend habit,
(All that I am turnd into eies) I looke on
A deede of mine so fiendlike, that repentance,
Though with my teares I taught the sea new tides,
Can neuer wash off; all my thefts, my rapes
Are veniall trespasses compar’d to what
I offer’d to that shape, and in a place too
Where I stood bound to kneele to’t. (4.1.73–80)

“All my thefts, my rapes,” he insists, “Are veniall trespasses compar’d to what / I offer’d to that shape” (4.1.73–80). Grimaldi is convinced that this one act has so stained him that the mark will never wash off; but Francisco first announces forgiveness and then teaches Grimaldi how to merit it, telling him that salvation, although freely given, must

also be "purchased" by good works (85–87). Grimaldi feels an immediate transformation—"What celestiall balme / I feele now pour'd into my wounded conscience"—but, more than this, he learns the lesson: "Can good deeds redeeme me?" he asks, and then promises to over-balance the list of his bad deeds with good ones:

I that haue sold such as professed the Faith,
That I was borne in, to captiuitie,
Will make their number equall, that I shall
Deliuer from the oare; and winne as many,
By the cleerenesse of my actions, to looke on
Their misbeleefe, and loth it. (4.1.96–104)

The scene of Grimaldi's redemption is predicated on both eucharistic reverence and a theology of good works. But this does not necessarily make it Catholic: understood in the context of a Laudian insistence on ritual and on the necessity of works as well as faith, it is also perfectly Protestant. *The Renegado* provokes the accusation of popery by its refusal to condemn aspects of Catholic faith, promoting the sense of a broad Christian unity. But this seeming inclusiveness should also be understood as a redirected mode of exclusion: the Laudian vision of unity includes all Christians but those to whom the appeal to sacramental wonder looks Catholic and antichristian. In *The Renegado*, this exclusion is silent. No "puritan" figures are satirized. The strategy is rather to foreground ceremonial sacramentalism, and allow the exclusion to operate at the level of the reader's response.

The relationship between this marvelous sacramentalism and a Laudian vision of Christendom is reinforced in the scenes of Donusa's conversion. At the end of act four, Donusa and Vitelli are forced to choose: either Vitelli must convert to Islam or both must die. Donusa tries to convert him using a series of arguments familiar from other stories of renegadism: the power of Islam, the pleasure of conversion, the ease of the act itself. Vitelli responds with an equally conventional tirade against Islam's "iugling Prophet" that touches on all the standard elements of anti-Islamic polemic. These words guarantee his death, as Asambeg announces. But they also begin to work a strange transformation in Donusa: "this is vnanswerable," she responds; "there's something tells me / I erre in my opinion" (4.3.138–39).

When act five begins, Vitelli is planning a scaffold scene that will be at once conversion, marriage, and execution, and we see him consulting with Francisco about Donusa's spiritual condition. Her renunciation of "Mahomet" is not enough to make her Christian: she "yet

wants / The holy badge that should proclaime her fit / For these Celestiall Nuptialls" (5.1.22–24). That is, she needs to be baptized, and Vitelli is worried how this can be achieved. "In a case / Of this necessity," he asks Francisco, "I would gladly learne, / Whether in me a layman, without orders, / It may not be religious, and lawfull / As we go to our deaths to doe that office?" (5.1.28–32). Francisco tells him that midwives can perform baptism when necessary, and also invokes the more elevated example of "Knights that in the Holy-Land fought for / The freedom of Hierusalem," who, dying on the battlefield, would baptize each other with the sweat drawn from their helmets—a scene virtually right out of Tasso, in the battlefield baptism given, with water drawn out of a helmet, by Tancred to a dying Clorinda.⁴⁵ The effort to redeem the Holy Land is mapped onto Vitelli's effort to redeem Donusa and in turn onto every act of baptism, every sacred ritual marking the passage from unbelief to true faith. The sacrament represents the effort to mark that transition, and to draw a firm line between faith and faithlessness, Christian and infidel.

On the scaffold, Vitelli arranges to have water brought to him, claiming he needs it to perform the Italian funeral rites. When he anoints Donusa with the water, Vitelli gives another explanation for what it will accomplish: "The cleerenesse of this is a perfit signe / Of innocence," he announces; "it hath power / To purge those spots that cleue vpon the minde, / If thankfully receiu'd" (5.3.111–16). Vitelli blurs the line between asserting that the baptismal water itself has a certain power and that the water is only the sign of an inward cleansing, its power dependent on being "thankfully receiu'd." But Donusa experiences this baptism as a miraculous transformation. "I am an other woman," she exclaims;

till this minute
I neuer liu'd, nor durst thinke how to die.
How long haue I beene blinde? Yet on the suddaine,
By this blest meanes I feele the filmes of error
Tane from my soules eyes" (5.3.121–25).

In these words, baptism seems more than a sign: it is magical, even miraculous, and Donusa calls it "this miracle" (5.3.129). In the scene in which she debated with Vitelli the respective merits of their religions, Donusa was convinced of the truth of Christianity; but she does not *experience* that truth until this moment. The sacrament completes the process of conversion, grants a new sight, a new life, and in this sense it seems to be, as Donusa calls it, a "blest meanes." Ritual is an essential component of what it is to be Christian.

The play's answer to the problem of Christian identity is in some ways an inclusive one: "the Christian" is located, finally, in the miraculous experience of the two sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, that is, in the two sacraments shared by both Protestants and Catholics alike. In this sense, the play may in the end ask us to take more seriously Gazet's willingness to conform to the practices of "*England, Spaine, France, Rome, Geneva*"—a list that encompasses the range of established Christian churches in the period—but not to those of Tunis. From the distance of North Africa, Gazet offers a geography of Christian faith in which Rome and Geneva do not seem so radically separated. This apparent inclusiveness has led one critic to describe *The Renegado* as "undenominationally Christian."⁴⁶ The play recalls the minimalist definitions of Christianity pursued by Arminians or Laudians from Grotius to Montagu. The miraculous power of the sacraments in Massinger's play testifies to a desire to occlude all narrow doctrinal differences, all disputable readings of scripture or history, and to give oneself over to the experience of a wonder that cuts off awkward questions and ends all dispute. But at the same time, *The Renegado* suggests the limits of this wonder and the exclusions it continues to enforce. The play's seemingly ecumenical stance, which embraces even the Jesuits, nevertheless also marks its own elisions, leaving all forward Protestants out of its vision of a rejuvenated Christian society. The fantasy of escape from Tunis seeks to forget still-ongoing conflicts, to forget that not everyone would celebrate an escape from Islam that was also a fall into Catholicism: "sooner Turks than Papists," as the Dutch wrote on their hats. The play also abandons the possibility of any legitimate contact with "Turks." Like *The Tempest*, it ends with a retreat from North Africa: *The Renegado* can only imagine contaminating forms of "commerce" with Islam. The wonder with which the play ends occludes continuing forms of cross-cultural contact and refuses any cosmopolitanism that looks beyond the borders of Christendom.⁴⁷

I do not mean to argue that Philip Massinger wrote *The Renegado* as a deliberate piece of Laudian propaganda: that would make him a very prescient reader of the political scene in the spring of 1624, and it would also require a whole rethinking of our current assumptions about his religious politics.⁴⁸ What I do want to suggest is that the effort to salve the anxieties of "commerce" with Islam—both an expanding global market and the cross-cultural encounters encouraged by that market—also opened up tensions within English Protestantism. The effort to imagine a Christian world purified of its relations with "Turks" forced once again the question of what "the

Christian” could be, in the early seventeenth century. It is perhaps interesting, in this connection, to consider Robert Brenner’s argument that the Levant Company merchants consistently sponsored a Laudian religious politics, even after the fall of Laud made such commitments dangerous: they repeatedly appointed anti-puritan ministers to their factories, including, in March 1630, Edward Pocock—who, when he returned from the Levant, took up Arabic studies at Oxford, under Laud’s patronage.⁴⁹ There seems to have been a direct correlation between representations and studies of Islam and a religious politics that sought to reinstate the unity of a troubled Christendom. The cases of both Richard Knolles and King James further underscore this link. In this sense, *The Renegado* demonstrates that we need to be able to imagine a more global early modern religious politics, one that tries simultaneously to think multiple forms of difference across various global spaces, and does not cordon off post-Reformation histories from the histories of contact with Islam.

In shifting attention from doctrine to ritual and the sacraments, Laudianism sought to reactivate a broad and flexible understanding of what it means to be Christian. It may also have encouraged a different understanding of identity, predicated on a sense of shared racial and cultural formations rather than narrowly defined religious communities. In *The Renegado*, certainly, the question of Islamic difference ramifies into layered sexual, racial, and political differences that cannot be read simply as metaphorical extensions of a single, religious inversion. Sexuality, in particular, lies at the heart of the narrative of Grimaldi’s renegadism, as well as the narrative of Paulina’s imprisonment by Asambeg. That second plot in fact includes a conversation between Paulina and her captor that explicitly addresses the question of differing regimes of sexuality. Early in the play, in Donusa’s rooms at the palace, the English-born eunuch Carazie had offered a satirical reading of the excessive sexual and social freedoms enjoyed by English women, whom he imagines sponsoring a Parliamentary bill legalizing female adultery (1.2.43–48). In the conversation between Paulina and Asambeg, the question of gender and freedom is addressed very differently. There, Paulina speaks against her imprisonment in terms that evoke not just the romance narrative of captivity but also the practice of the seclusion of women: she is “mewed vp, and excluded from / Humane society; the vse of pleasures; / The necessary, not superfluous duties / Of seruants” (2.5.140–43). Women’s freedom to enjoy the social pleasures of human society is defended in terms that potentially include both the Turkish harem and very English anxieties about women’s public presence and their access to “the vse

of pleasures," licit or illicit. The play's fascinated rehearsal of the sexual practices of Tunis might be said to translate religious difference into the difference of two regimes of sexuality, one identified with heterosexual monogamy, the other with sexual slavery, sodomy, and the harem. The representation of a Turkish sexual regime in which bodies are bought and sold and in which national and religious loyalties are traded for profit, turning both men and women into "strange commodities," dovetails with a critical reading of England's economic liaisons with Islam and of an expanding global capitalism that encourages strange erotic and commercial entanglements.

The Renegado may finally reveal something important about the cultural effects of a Laudian politics: that is, it may reveal the links between that politics and the efforts of Bodin or Grotius to think beyond sectarian identities. In this, Laudianism may represent an important contribution to the seventeenth-century effort to imagine "Europe" in cultural, racial, and sexual terms. It should certainly be read in terms of the changing relations between Europe and Islam, since it was precisely by redirecting attention to Islamic difference that the Laudians sought to address the problem of Christian confessional conflict. True Christian identity was redefined through the twin exclusions of Islam and radical Protestantism. In the process, the Laudians forged a strange relationship between sectarians and Muslims, in the early history of European modernity. The continuing story of that relationship will be the subject of chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5



FROM PLEASURE TO TERROR

In the sixteenth century, romance seemed dangerously Catholic. For Roger Ascham, notoriously, the genre belonged to a time “whan Papistrie, as a standyng poole, couered and ouerflowed all England.”¹ By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, on the other hand, it seems to have become eastern, exotic, even Islamic. “That peculiar and arbitrary species of Fiction which we commonly call Romantic,” Thomas Warton wrote, “appears to have been imported into Europe by a people, whose modes of thinking, and habits of invention, are not natural to that country”; that is, “It is generally supposed to have been borrowed from the Arabians.”² From an idolatrous literary form, romance became the product of a racially alien mentality, something like Shaftesbury’s “mysterious race of black enchanters.”³ For Warton, this othering of romance secures a certain confidence about Europe as a unitary cultural space capable of absorbing and civilizing the “extravagant” and “capricious” imagination of the Arabs: Warton associates both the Arabs and romance with an imaginatively fertile but archaic and unruly past from which he and his readers can feel themselves comfortably enough removed to see it as a source of aesthetic pleasure and a wellspring of the sublime (ii, lxxiii). When Ascham thinks of romance, he associates it with something alien in the very recent past, an abyss separating sixteenth-century England from its authentic cultural and spiritual origins and still dividing it in his own moment; when Warton imagines the Arab origins of romance, all of Europe becomes in his words “that country,” as if the specter of Arab difference had the power to make a nation out of a continent and to bring Europe into being as a coherent cultural entity.

One might ask how this shift in the cultural associations of a literary genre helped to prepare the way for Romantic orientalism. In this inquiry the texts of the seventeenth century would hold an important place: it was over a page from Samuel Purchas's collection of travel narratives that Coleridge famously claimed to have drifted into the opium dream that inspired "Kubla Khan"; less famously, it was to his childhood reading of Richard Knolles's history of the Turks that Byron attributed the "oriental colouring" of his poetry.⁴ When Europe reclaimed romance, it reclaimed it as an eastern and archaic form, doubly removed in both space and time, and it reclaimed it in part through a rereading of its own texts about Islam.⁵ But before such a reclamation could take place, before Europeans could rediscover in the east a reserve of intense feeling from which they felt themselves cut off, "Europe" and "the east" had to be constituted as such, the difference of Christianity from Islam reimaged in terms of a series of other differences, of politics, race, culture, "modes of thinking and habits of invention," in Warton's words. The change in the understanding of romance marked by the passage from Ascham to Warton signals a shift in the representation of Islam and a shift in the way Europe imagined itself: that is, it signals the consolidation of a new sense of European identity.

A crucial moment of this history takes place in the mid-seventeenth century, in the charged politics of romance during and after the English Revolution. The central figure in this chapter will be John Milton, but the chapter's trajectory will lead beyond Milton toward a reconfiguration of religion, politics, and identity in the wake of the English Revolution. Milton's late poetry reveals a double relationship to romance, at once diagnosing the religious and political errors embodied in the genre and outlining a program for its reform. Milton uses romance to critique a courtly aesthetics with its investment in exotic pleasures; but his late poems also reveal a perhaps surprising investment in chivalric romance, which becomes a sign of both Satanic error and a continued hope for the reconciliation of human political action and divine purposes. The chapter will conclude by tracing the emergence of a counterrevolutionary discourse that defines this sacred politics as fundamentally irrational and Islamic, as the work of "enthusiasm," a term that is in many ways a direct progenitor of the modern discourse of "terrorism."⁶ From the 1640s on, the royalists imagined parliamentarians and defenders of regicide like Milton as fanatical revolutionaries on the model of Muhammad, zealots who claimed divine inspiration and believed themselves soldiers of God—and who could therefore be derided as new Quixotes, disrupting the world with

a dangerously literal enactment of chivalric fantasy. According to this reading, Milton and Muhammad alike embody forms of revolutionary iconoclasm, in their refusal of all established forms of political rationality in the service of what Thomas Hobbes called "gallant madness."⁷ This moment marks the emergence of a new critique of romance, based not, as with Ascham, on its supposed Catholicism and licentiousness, but on its irrationality and its encouragement of potentially dangerous forms of political fantasy.⁸ This moment also marks a decisive transformation of both English politics and English representations of Islam. Alongside the old depictions of Islamic pleasure, which imagined Islam as a carnal perversion of Christian truth, there emerged a newly powerful image of Islamic fanaticism, Islamic "terror." This image in significant ways helped to invent modern politics and the modern itself, rearticulating at once the difference of the Islamic world and another difference within England, between those who seek for a divine transformation of the world by sacred power and those who seek for a peace guaranteed by a sacralization of state power. For a post-Restoration culture intent on securing the state from religious dissent, romance became a literary embodiment of everything irrational, exotic, archaic, and Islamic.

The terrorist as revolutionary, as fanatic, as an alien presence cast out from the regime of the modern: a peculiar relationship is forged between Milton and the Muslim by a Europe that constitutes itself as the space of a rational, pure politics, a politics separated from the seductions of both literary and religious enthusiasm. In tracing these links, I will show how the question of political modernity in Europe has from its beginnings been caught up with the figure of the Muslim, and how the representation of Islam was connected to the most intense and immediate political conflicts. At the same time, I will also argue that, despite the immense labor invested in repudiating all "medieval," irrational, romantic, and "Arab" conceptions, this emerging political theory did not so much refuse the sacred as reappropriate it, transform it. What this seventeenth-century moment reveals—in ways that continue to trouble contemporary conceptions of the political—is the secret complicity of political modernity with the sacred violence it claimed to expel. In this history, both romance and Islam play a crucial role.

In the middle decades of the seventeenth century, romance was newly politicized. During the 1630s, Charles I and his court had appropriated the language of pastoral romance as part of an elaborate rhetoric of self-presentation that sought to displace the memory of the more militant fictions of Elizabethan chivalry.⁹ Van Dyck's equestrian

portrait of Charles offers a telling instance of this aesthetic. Equestrian portraiture usually locates an imperial aggression in the pose of the monarch's body: in Titian's *Emperor Charles V at Mühlberg*, the emperor wears full armor, rides a rearing horse, and carries a spear, its point thrusting forward. An earlier state of the painting may have depicted Charles's horse trampling a Turk, an image that conflates his brief conquest of Tunis with his victory over the Protestants at Mühlberg.¹⁰ Van Dyck's Charles I, on the other hand, rides a horse that is prancing, not rearing; he carries no exposed weapon, but a staff, a symbol of authority largely concealed by the horse's flank; and he has removed his helmet, revealing his long hair and, dangling from one ear, a pendant pearl earring. Charles V offers a show of force; Charles I shows that force does not need to be used. His rule is characterized by a cultured sophistication embodied in his long hair and pearl earring, a regime of taste and wealth that compels allegiance precisely by its refusal to enforce it. The Caroline romance suppresses the genre's militarism.

Through the 1640s and 1650s, romance continued to be associated with loyalty to Charles or his son, or with hope for the reconciliation of king and parliament.¹¹ In this context, it is perhaps no surprise that Milton struggled with romance throughout his career. The shifting outlines of his relationship to the genre have several times been documented: he early on intended to write a romance, perhaps the "Arthuriad" that Spenser left unfinished; many of his early works—*Mansus*, *Epithalamium Damonis*, *A Mask*, "Il Penseroso"—reveal a strong interest in allegorical romance on the Spenserian model; and the tracts of the 1640s use chivalric imagery to figure the zeal of the reformers. But then, in its attack on the *Eikon Basilike*'s use of a prayer from Sidney's *Arcadia*, *Eikonoklastes* strikingly repudiates the "sweet rapsodies of Heathenism and Knighterrantry," and the prose of the 1650s shows itself more nervous about the content of romance fiction, more anxious about exactly what kinds of pleasures it elicits.¹² Finally, the late poems, while on the surface they seem to be worlds away from romance, reveal a pattern of allusions to the genre that make it at once paradoxically absent and present, a continual and continually displaced reference point.¹³

One moment in this history has particularly stood out. When in *Areopagitica* Milton describes the "true warfaring Christian," he thinks of Spenser's Guyon (*CPW*, 2.516). But he also famously misremembers or corrects Spenser: recounting the episode of Mammon's Cave, he puts the Palmer at Guyon's side, and leaves unmentioned the strange moment in which Guyon faints, upon exiting the cave.¹⁴

Milton presents a staunch Guyon who never feels the allure of what he sees, and who is never exposed to temptation alone. He turns to romance to define his narrative of Christian experience, but his revision of Spenser suggests a certain nervousness about the genre.

The question of romance enters Milton's later poetry in part by way of Eden, the descriptions of which establish certain relays between romance, "the east," and Milton's political theology. The garden is one of the key sites of romance, a seductive space that tempts knights into forms of errant enjoyment.¹⁵ It is also an eastern site, its pleasures coded at once as courtly and oriental. The island of Alcina in Ariosto, for example, is situated in "India," its "Welcoming groves of laurel, cool and soft, / Of palm, and myrtle, fragrant and most sweet, / And orange-trees and cedar" suggesting a distinctly eastern beauty.¹⁶ The gate to this garden bears a relief "encrusted . . . / With precious jewels from the Orient"; inside, Ruggiero and Alcina feast like "monarchs of Assyria" or like Antony and Cleopatra, and when they drink, "on their lips a sweeter flower they taste / Than Ind or Araby e'er knew" (6.71; 7.20; 7.29).

Perfumed air and wine define the sensory experience of Ariosto's garden. In Spenser, too, the garden's "milde air . . . breathed forth sweet spirit and wholesome smell," while its gate, with its elaborate depiction of the story of Jason and Medea, warns about the exotic seductions within (2.12.51, 44–45). The reference to that story links the sea journey to the Bower with forms of merchant "adventure" and suggests that the luxuriousness of this place is exotic, extravagant, and that Acrasia's powers are the strange powers of a Medea or a Circe. In Ariosto, when Melissa tries to rescue Ruggiero from his enchanted idleness, she finds him dressed in silk and gold, "exquisite attire . . . soft and sensuous," and wearing pearl earrings, "one dangling at each ear, / Finer than Indians or Arabs wear" (7.54)—a description that in the mid-seventeenth century might have brought to mind Charles I, who was almost invariably portrayed wearing such earrings.¹⁷ In Tasso's garden, Rinaldo is "tressed / with dainty touches, reeking of perfume, / his hair in curls and tassels on his vest, / his dangling sword effeminate at his side."¹⁸ The romance garden is a global site, a literary place or topos that inscribes a relationship between pleasure, beauty, and identity that is also a relationship between "east" and "west."

Medieval and early modern representations of Islam drew powerfully on the image of the pleasure garden, the corrupt, worldly imitation of paradise, to frame the difference between Christian salvation and the debased pleasures supposedly offered by Islam. Early modern

travel narratives both searched for the site of paradise and described various eastern sites as "Paradisiat."¹⁹ But they also imagined Islam itself as a garden of false pleasures. Central to such accounts was the Qur'anic description of paradise, understood as a pleasure garden whose carnal enjoyments could not be redeemed by a figurative reading of the kind routinely offered for, say, the Song of Songs.²⁰ Where Christianity offered salvation and access to the true heaven, Islam dreamt of bodily pleasures. "They shall haue their fill of lust in the presence of God," as Samuel Purchas wrote.²¹ The pleasure garden provided the template for imagining Islamic error, carnality, and sin.

Against this background, Milton's Eden seems both uncourtly and unexotic, natural rather than ornate or sophisticated, native rather than strange or foreign. When Adam and Eve retire to their bower, we are explicitly told that here are no "Court Amours, / Mixt Dance, or wanton Mask, or Midnight Ball, / Or Serenate."²² The garden cultivates the appearance of a natural profusion, not the labyrinthine complexity for which French gardens were famous: the flowers of Eden are arranged by "Nature boon / Pour'd forth profuse on Hill and Dale and Plain," not by "nice Art / In Beds and curious Knots" (4.241–43). These beds and knots are the elaborately geometrical patterns of the formal flower garden, intricate designs often related to the designs of eastern carpets and ceramics.²³ Milton's Eden embodies a perfected nature, not an eastern artifice, its aesthetic of the natural signaling a refusal of the baroque pleasures of romance.

And yet, at times Eden also recalls those earlier romance gardens, perhaps above all in its perfumed air. When Satan arrives there, what he sees is as "lovely" as a "Landskip," but it is another sense that is most powerfully stimulated. On the wall of paradise, he is met by a "purer air" that "to the heart inspires / Vernal delight and joy, able to drive / All sadness but despair" (4.152–56). Satan has already anticipated—and misunderstood—the effects of Edenic air, while speaking to the assembled fallen angels: the decision to colonize the newly created world will "once more lift us up," he announces, if not to heaven then to "some mild Zone" where "the soft delicious Air, / To heal the scar of these corrosive Fires / Shall breathe her balm" (2.393, 397–402). Satan attributes to Eden's air a power that properly belongs to a divine inspiration he has already refused: the balmy air of Eden can salve any sorrow *except* despair.

Edenic balm imparts a distinctive fragrance to the air: Eden's "rich Trees" weep "odorous Gums and Balm," just as the "Arabian trees" of Othello's imagination drop tears of "medicinal gum."²⁴ When Adam wakes Eve at the beginning of Book 5, he calls her to their work

of gardening, “to mark how spring / Our tended Plants, how blows the Citron Grove, / What drops the Myrrh, and what the balmy Reed” (5.21–23). Balm or balsamum—also called Balm of Gilead and Balm of Mecca—is a now unidentified but once much-prized substance, made from the resinous secretion of certain trees native to the Middle East and Africa.²⁵ So many medicinal effects were attributed to it that in the classical period it was considered a panacea and became the most costly of the many aromatic substances imported for Roman consumption: Pliny cites the fantastic prices balm would fetch on the imperial market, and describes how unscrupulous merchants would doctor, dilute, or falsify the precious substance.²⁶

From Pliny, early modern readers would have learned a complex set of associations with balm, linking empire, Eastern imports, and the expense—economic, cultural, ethical—of such aromatic substances. Pliny documents the various luxury goods Rome imported from India and Arabia, including pearls, silks, and perfumes:

surely our pleasures, our delights, and our women together, are so costly vnto vs, that there is not a yeare goeth ouer our heads, but what in pearles, perfumes, and silkes; India, the Seres, and that demy-Island of Arabia, stands vs at the least in an hundred millions of Sesterces, and so much fetch they from vs in good money, within the compasse of our Empire. (2I6r)

Perfumes and ointments come in for special attack. “At this day there is not in Rome any thing wherein men more exceed,” he writes, “than in these costly and precious ointments” (2K6r). As Rome conquered Asia, Asian tastes conquered Roman austerity. Once, the censors forbade anyone in Rome to sell “forreine or strange ointments,” but this effort to enforce a Roman cultural aesthetic failed: “now adaies, some there be so wanton and delicat, that there is not wine or other drinke good with them, nor will go downe their throat, vnlesse it be spiced and aromatized with these baulmes” (2K6v).

As he sits on Eden’s wall, Satan smells an eastern fragrance for which Roman consumers paid exorbitant sums: “Now gentle gales / Fanning thir odoriferous wings dispense / Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole / Those balmy spoils” (*PL*, 4.156–59). There is a hint of equivocation, here, about these “native” scents that, stolen by the wind, become “spoils.” The following lines underscore this double awareness, of Edenic pleasures and the corrupt pleasures of global commerce:

As when to them who sail
Beyond the *Cape of Hope*, and now are past

Mozambic, off at Sea North-East winds blow
Sabeen Odors from the spicy shore
 Of *Araby* the blest, with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend
 Who came thir bane. (4.159–67)

The delights of Eden, identified in their fullest sensory immediacy with smell, present themselves to Satan as commodities, spices and perfumes readily appropriable as “balmy spoils” by the merchant adventurer sailing around Africa toward India.

In the early modern period, the English were again in search of balm. A page of notes on Levantine cities and commodities probably drafted by Burghley in 1582 mentions “balszara,” that is, Basra, “wher y^e best baulm is made.”²⁷ William Lithgow claimed to have found an Egyptian source for balm. “As for their Balsamo,” he writes, “the Garden wherein it groweth, lyeth neere to the South-side of Cayre, and inclosed with a high Wall” (2S3v). It seems, in fact, that Egyptian balm production ceased in the fifteenth century, but in England and Spain there were hopes that it might be rediscovered, or that the New World might produce new balms.²⁸ When Milton imagines an Eden whose most visceral characteristic is the aroma imparted to it by balm trees, and when he imagines Satan hoping for a salve for his suffering in the balm of paradise, he extends and deepens Pliny’s concern about the ethical costs of foreign tastes, linking global commerce to fraudulent pleasures and fraudulent medicines. Eden’s balm materializes what it means to live in proximity to the divine; postlapsarian dreams of balm offer the deceptive promise of a new paradise of consumption.

Other hints also suggest a double relationship between the pure pleasures of Eden and the fraudulent ones of the romance garden. A famous passage at the end of Book 4 insists on the pure, unfallen sexuality of Eden, its “Love unlibidinous”; but those “Rites / Mysterious” take place in a “blissful Bower,” a phrase that pointedly glances at the “licentious toyes” of Spenser’s Bower, itself a “Paradise . . . In which all pleasures plenteously abound.”²⁹ The pleasures of Eden at once recall and reform the very different pleasures of Spenser’s garden. Milton at times describes Eden in terms that recall the gaudy beauties of romance. Of the rivers of Eden, he seeks to “tell . . ., if Art could tell,”

How from that Sapphire Fount the crisped Brooks,
 Rolling on Orient Pearl and sands of Gold,

With mazy error under pendant shades
 Ran Nectar. (4.236–40)

“Mazy error” offers a famously strange description of the windings of Eden’s rivers, one that seems to invite us to discover error even in paradise. The sapphire, pearl, and gold of those rivers further insinuate the possibility of a wandering desire. The word “Orient” is usually glossed as meaning “bright” or “beautiful,” as Merritt Hughes does for the “orient liquor in a Crystal Glass” that Comus offers to weary travelers in *A Maske*: “bright,” Hughes writes, “like orient (i.e. eastern) pearls” (64). The meaning he gives this word, in other words, emerges through a transformational process that links beauty, the east, and eastern pearls—tellingly, in the evocation of a false beauty, a cup whose “pleasing poison” turns those who taste it into half-human monsters (526).

All of these meanings potentially underlie the “Orient Pearl” of Eden’s rivers, linking Eden—like its balmy air—at once to eastern commodities and to the deceptive beauty of romance gardens. Eden is shadowed by the fraudulent paradises fallen humanity has built for itself, as its future history suggests:

blissful Paradise
 Of God the Garden was, by him in the East
 Of *Eden* planted; *Eden* stretch’d her Line
 From *Auran* Eastward to the Royal Tow’rs
 Of Great *Seleucia*, built by *Grecian* Kings,
 Or where the Sons of *Eden* long before
 Dwelt in *Telassar*: in this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant Garden God ordain’d. (4.208–15)

The reference to “Seleucia” places Eden in modern-day Iraq, a region here associated with monarchy and especially with Hellenic imperialism. After describing Eden, Milton returns to the question of its site, insisting that this is not Prosperina’s garden in Sicily, nor Daphne’s grove in Syria, nor Jupiter Ammon’s island at Tunis, nor Mount Amara in Ethiopia, but “this *Assyrian* Garden” (4.285).

This is not the first time Assyria has been mentioned in *Paradise Lost*. At the end of Book I, Mammon engages in a massive project of engineering, reshaping the desolate, burning spaces of hell into something both beautiful and troublingly familiar, a building

like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid

With Golden Architrave; nor did there want
 Cornice or Frieze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n;
 The Roof was fretted Gold. Not *Babylon*,
 Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence
 Equall'd in all thir glories, to inshrine
Belus or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat
 Thir Kings, when *Egypt* with *Assyria* strove
 In wealth and luxury. (1.710–22)

By the time Milton instructs us about the location of paradise, we are already familiar with Assyria as the scene of empire and idolatry and of an infernal architecture that connotes at once power—the harsh lines of the doric columns—and lavish majesty: a gold roof, cornices, friezes, reliefs, the elaborate aesthetics, perhaps, of the seventeenth-century baroque.³⁰ The comparison of Pandemonium to Assyria and Cairo evokes an orientalist vision that transcends time, collapsing the empires of scriptural antiquity with the modern Islamic world. The evocation of an architectural form closer to home also suggests that the scene of tyranny and idolatry was infinitely transportable, that Italy or England could become a new Babylon or a new hell. Assyria was once Eden, and this transformation stands as a sign of the radical changes wrought by the Fall: if the mind cannot, as Satan hopes, make a heaven of hell, it can clearly make a hell of heaven.

The mark of Satanic error is its effort to approximate divinity by gaudy shows:

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far
 Outshone the wealth of *Ormus* and of *Ind*,
 Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
 Show'rs on her Kings *Barbaric* Pearl and Gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
 To that bad eminence. (*PL*, 2.1–6)

Pandemonium—like Satan's expectations of Edenic balm—is a work of solace, a substitute for a lost heaven. The monarchy of hell is "*Barbaric*," its effort to fabricate a factitious heaven the measure of its fallenness: the shift from "gorgeous" to "*Barbaric*" signals the distance between true splendor and the false shows of a Satanic aesthetic. Even syntactically, that word "*Barbaric*" equivocates, rendering it uncertain whether it is the kings of Ormus and India that are barbaric, or the "Pearl and Gold" of kingly display. Between the description of hell and our first glimpse of Eden, "Assyria" becomes the sign of this debased, worldly imitation of the divine: in its evocation of the empty

beauties of romance, the "*Assyrian* garden" hints at a postlapsarian future intimately linked to the history of both idolatry and monarchy.

In this, romance opens up for Milton a reading of the subjective operations at the heart of monarchy. The pleasure wealthy sophisticates take in beautiful objects is at the center of Milton's diagnosis of how monarchy sustains itself: it is monarchy's affective ground, the way it takes hold of people who could choose to be free and makes them enjoy their own servitude. At the end of the *Second Defense*, Milton warns the English that their liberty is based on their character. If a citizen fails in virtue, freedom disappears: "If you begin to slip into the same vices, to imitate those men, to seek the same goals, to clutch at the same vanities, you actually are royalists yourselves" (*CPW*, 4/1.681). The loss of freedom begins in subjective disorder, misplaced desires, "excess and folly" (681). The nation that "has delivered itself into slavery to its own lusts, is enslaved also to other masters whom it does not choose, and serves not only voluntarily but also against its will" (4/1.684).

Milton consistently imagines monarchy as encouraging in its subjects a debased love of beautiful things. The king himself is a thing mistakenly loved: in *The Ready and Easy Way* Milton writes that "a king must be ador'd like a Demigod, with a dissolute and haughtie court about him, of vast expence and luxurie": the king must "pageant himself up and down in progress among the perpetual bowings and cringings of an abject people, on either side deifying and adoring him" (7.425–26). Milton's emphasis on pleasure evokes the standard narrative of early modern tyrant plays, in which the tyrant's abrogation of civil, ethical, and divine law materializes itself as a perverse desire.³¹ But Milton relocates the tyrant's pleasure, making it clear that it is in fact "our" pleasure, as the subjects of tyranny: "More just it is doubtless," Milton writes, "that a less number compel a greater to retain . . . thir libertie, then that a greater number for the pleasure of thir baseness, compel a less most injuriously to be thir fellow slaves" (7.455). The pleasure of one's baseness: the point is that we *enjoy* our own subjection. The secret of the tyrant dramas is that the real tyrants are the subjected people themselves.

In this way, Milton installs pleasure at the heart of his political analysis, as the secret affective tie of monarchy. In these passages, he describes kingship as a kind of idolatry, as he had already suggested in *Eikonoklastes*, a tract that is almost entirely about the strange pleasure people take in their misplaced worship of kings. The "inconstant, irrational, and Image-doting rabble," he writes, "begott'n to servility, and enchanted with these popular institutes of Tyranny, . . . hold out

both thir eares with such delight and ravishment to be stigmatiz'd and board through in witness of thir own voluntary and beloved baseness" (3.601). The love of kingship is a kind of fetishism in which the subject attaches an excessive and perverse value to the figure of the king: the people are "affatuated" with the king and even with his faults (3.341). They are "stupidifi'd and bewitch'd" into "blinde and obstinate believe" (3.347). In other words, monarchy is a romance, according to the terms in which Ascham understood the genre, a bewitching fiction that consumes those who consume it.

The "aim" of monarchs, Milton writes, "is to make the people, wealthie . . . but otherwise softest, basest, vitioussest, servilest, easiest to be kept under" (7.460). Milton diagnoses monarchy in terms of its sensual affects: the balm that falsely promises a panacea for all disease, the pearl and gold that fraudulently reproduce the glory of heaven. In this, "the east" becomes one of the most potent symbols of the damage done to humanity by its own misguided desires. From the location of the earthly paradise, the east becomes a pleasure garden, the site of fraudulent and fetishistic forms of enjoyment, and the source that exports those enjoyments to the rest of the world.³² The garden, of course, is a long-standing trope for the mind and its powers of self-cultivation, its capacity to inculcate various regimes of the self. In Eden, gardening is a work of praise, but it also real work (*PL*, 4.436–38). Eve calls it a "pleasant task enjoin'd," but also suggests a wildness in the garden that must be tamed: "what we by day / Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, / One night or two with wanton growth derides / Tending to wild" (9.207–12). Adam denies that the work is difficult, but not that this is labor "enjoin'd," necessary work, which he mentions in Book 4 in close proximity with the prohibition against eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Even before the fall, gardening evokes a regime of self-control, a pruning of wild growth closely associated with the need to restrain unruly desires.

For Milton, self-control enables freedom: those who cultivate "eastern" pleasures also cultivate an "eastern" servitude, like the Israelites in Exodus who want to return to Egypt, or like the Israelites in 1 Samuel 8 who demand to be ruled by kings, "like all the nations"—a desire Milton reads as "gentilizing," "affecting to resemble heathen."³³ The dynamic of temptation, which in romance already inscribed a relationship to Islam, is re-read as disclosing the subjective heart of monarchy, as well as the unrestrained taste that inaugurates the fall. James Harrington accused the royalists of seeking to turn England into Turkey.³⁴ Milton at times echoes this rhetoric, for example in *Eikonoklastes*, where he describes Charles's government as "a

Turkish Tyranny, that spurn'd down those Laws, which gave it life and being" (CPW, 3.453). But Milton locates this self-orientalization above all in the wayward longings of the English people, "*affecting* to resemble heathen." The way forward, in the face of this subjective impasse, is through a wholesale reorganization of affect. The road to a renewed world lies through a "paradise within," that is, through the transformation of human pleasures and desires (PL, 12.587). This, as Milton understands it, is one of the powers of poetry, "to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune." In *The Reason of Church Government*, that phrase appears between the capacity "to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of vertu, and publick civility," and "to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns the throne and equipage of Gods Almightynesse"; in his later work, the proper tuning of human "affections" turns out to be the ground of both of those other tasks (CPW, 1.816–17).

When Milton uses Spenser's Guyon to figure the tense dynamics of Christian experience in *Areopagitica*, he revises not only the episode of Mammon's Cave but also the ending of the Book of Temperance, writing that Spenser brought Guyon "with his palmer through the cave of Mammon, and the bowr of earthly blisse that he might see and know, and yet abstain" (CPW, 2.516). But whereas in the Cave Guyon might be said to have seen and known and yet abstained, in the Bower his mastery of his own desire—"His stubborne brest gan secret pleasaunce to embrace" (2.12.65)—expresses itself not just in resistance but in what Stephen Greenblatt has called "a supreme act of destructive excess."³⁵ When Milton uses Guyon to figure his "true warfaring Christian," he forgets or occludes this act of destruction. The textual history of that phrase embodies the interpretive issue at stake. The text published in 1644 reads "true wayfaring Christian," offering an image of pilgrimage instead of crusade; all four presentation copies, however, have the "y" deleted and an "r" inserted in its place. Whatever Milton intended to write—and perhaps he changed his mind—these variant readings encode in compact form the whole problem of Christian militancy (CPW, 2.515).

Milton downplays the violence of Spenser's narrative, emphasizing the work of resistance over the destruction with which the legend of temperance ends. But at the same time, that word "warfaring" redescribes the work of resistance as still in some sense warlike, a true or perfected model for Christian militancy. This reinscription of chivalric romance resonates through Milton's late poems. Book 1 of *Paradise Lost* is saturated with allusions to chivalric romance: Satan is a

“great Sultan” marshalling his armies (1.348)—his advisers will later be described as a “*Divan*” (10.457)—and Pandemonium, the “high Capitol / Of Satan and his Peers” (1.756–57), has a “spacious Hall . . . like a cover’d field, where Champions bold / Wont ride in arm’d, and at the Soldan’s chair / Defi’d the best of *Paynim* chivalry / To mortal combat or career with Lance” (1.762–66). Even the Spenserian orthography of that word “Soldan,” when the more modern “Sultan” was used earlier in the same book, evokes the romance of holy war against the Saracens.

But hell, of course, is no place for jousting, and it has no real Saracens and no champions to challenge them. At the end of the roll-call of this great sultan’s captains, we are reminded as much in a passage that is also an enumeration of romance sites: this hellish army exceeds in numbers

what resounds
In Fable or *Romance* of *Uther’s* Son
Begirt with *British* and *Armoric* Knights;
And all who since, Baptiz’d or Infidel
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
Or whom *Biserta* sent from *Afric* shore
When *Charlemain* with all his Peerage fell
By *Fontarabbia*. (1.579–87)

Milton lingers on the names of places associated with stories of crusade, but at the same time suggests how out-of-place such stories are. Hell’s army exceeds all of these romance armies, “Baptiz’d or Infidel,” a phrase that conflates crusader and Saracen and thereby recalls the problem that occupied Spenser in Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*: the possibility or impossibility of holy war, when God’s warriors themselves are errant.³⁶

In this moment, Milton takes on the Spenserian question of human and divine violence. In Spenser, certain knights are at key moments empowered to enact divine punishment on an erring world, to channel a sacred violence that aims at remaking the world: we see this in Guyon’s destruction of the Bower of Bliss, in Arthur’s fights with Saracens, and in the violence of Arthegall and Talus in Book 5. At certain moments, *The Faerie Queene* is a poem given over to the sacred. This is true in a particular way of the “sacred soile” of the Bower of Bliss (2.12.37). In the *View of the Present State of Ireland*, Spenser’s Ireneus speaks of “the wretchedness of that fatall kingedome which I thinke therefore was in olde time not Called amisse *Banno* or *sacra Insula* takinge *sacra* for accursed.”³⁷ The last canto of Book 5 of *The*

Faerie Queene—the canto that will describe the “heauie payne” that Arthegall inflicts on all rebels against Irena (5.12.25)—begins with an invocation of the “sacred hunger of ambitious mindes,” the obscure motive that generates rebellion and solicits divine punishment (5.12.1). These usages highlight what has been called the ambivalence of the sacred, its capacity to signify both divine presence and an utter abandonment by God; or, following Giorgio Agamben, they evoke the operation of a sovereignty that constitutes itself through the production of “bare life,” life that is vulnerable to a violence that is neither murder nor sacrifice.³⁸ Romance evokes the capacity of the individual to become an instrument of divine violence, in the name of God or of the state, or in some fusion of the two.

By the time we reach the passage on crusade romance in Book 1 of *Paradise Lost*, we have already been offered another model for thinking about sacred violence. Before the catalog of captains, before the reference to Satan as a “great Sultan,” his army, still prone on the lake of fire, is compared to leaves floating in the streams of northern Italy, and then to seaweed floating in the Red Sea, whose waves in turn recall another story: those same waves “o’erthrew”

Busiris and his *Memphian* Chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu’d
The Sojourners of *Goshen*, who beheld
From the safe shore thir floating Carcasses
And broken Chariot Wheels. (*PL*, 1.302–11)

The image of floating leaves dissolves into the image of Egyptian bodies drowning in the Red Sea, when God overwhelms them in their pursuit of the Israelites. The violence of holy war is withheld only to be translated into the divine violence of Exodus 14, in which Moses enjoins the Israelites to “stand” and see their enemies destroyed, so that “there remained not so much as one of them”: “Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore” (14:28–30). It is this passage that Christ adumbrates in *Paradise Lost* when he gives the heavenly army the injunction to “stand only”: war is deferred, but that deferral in turn solicits a still more terrifying divine violence (6.810).

This is not the rejection but the apotheosis of crusade. The same logic is replayed in Book 3 of *Paradise Regained*, when Satan offers Christ the military power of Parthia with which to redeem the captive tribes of Israel. “Such forces met not,” we are told, “When *Agrican* with all his Northern powers / Besieg’d *Albracca*, as Romances tell,”

in order to win back "*Angelica*, / His daughter, sought by many Prowest Knights, / Both *Paynim*, and the Peers of *Charlemagne*" (PR, 3.337–43). Once again, the promise of crusade romance collapses as we watch Saracens and Christians fall into the same error. And yet, these lines may also leave open the hope of something else: evoking the wandering narratives of Boiardo and Ariosto—for example, the opening of Ariosto's poem, where a Christian and a Saracen ride the same horse in pursuit of Angelica—Milton leaves suspended the possibility enacted by the further progress of Ariosto's narrative, that of a return to the fold, a realignment of God's armies and God's enemies.

In response to Satan's offer, Christ tells him that the captive tribes "wrought their own captivity, fell off / From God to worship Calves"; they have "left a race behind / Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce / From Gentiles but by Circumcision vain" (415–16, 423–25). Self-orientalized, self-enslaved, they do not deserve freedom. Similarly, in *Paradise Lost*, the catalog of the fallen angels, however much it resembles the epic catalogs of Homer and Virgil, testifies not to the military strength of hell's army but to the weak devotion of the Israelites. Again and again we are reminded that there is no army of God's people, because even the chosen fall away: "the Race of *Israel* oft forsook / Thir living strength" (PL, 4.432–33). There can be no holy war because there is no godly nation. All are seduced, all fallen, except for a tiny remnant, a few scattered, faithful souls. The work of Christian militancy turns into the work of resistance, "the better fight," as God calls it when he praises Abdiel, a fight whose sole aim is "To stand approv'd in sight of God, though Worlds / Judg'd thee perverse" (6.30, 36–37).

But in *Paradise Regained*, as in *Paradise Lost*, the invocation of crusade ends with the promise of another, divine violence, another iteration of the scene on the "safe shore" of the Red Sea: God "at length," Christ suggests, "time to himself best known," may issue "some wond'rous call" to the lost tribes, "And at their passing cleave the *Assyrian* flood . . . As the Red Sea and *Jordan* once he cleft" (PR, 3.433–38). Here, too, the possibility of holy war is enunciated but then postponed in a deferral that culminates in a repetition of the massacre of Pharaoh's army, a massive, world-historical destruction of the enemies of God. Crusade romance is not repudiated but translated, relocated: romance is abandoned only so that the providential plan can itself be reimagined as a romance, as a narrative of dislocation, wandering, and exile that culminates in a triumphant return and in an explosion of sacred violence. This, too, is a reading of romance, one

that emphasizes the apocalyptic moment within the genre. The interruption of romance does not signal a refusal of the narrative of war but its apotheosis, so that all of history becomes a holy war: if romance is revealed as an impossible fiction, romance aspirations are nevertheless recuperated at the level of providential history, which, like Ariosto's narrative, will finally separate God's army from God's enemies.³⁹

In this sense, the question of romance in Milton leads to a text that seems remote from the genre, but that represents Milton's most intense and most difficult engagement with the question of human and divine violence. In *Samson Agonistes*, Milton describes a moment of spectacular violence directed against a crowd caught in a moment of unholy enjoyment. The messenger describes how in "a spacious Theater" the Philistians have gathered to worship Dagon and to celebrate victory: "The Feast and noon grew high and Sacrifice / Had fill'd thir hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine, / When to thir sports they turn'd" (1605–14). The word "Theater" links this scene of sacrifice to the entertainments of Restoration England, a link between idolatry and pleasure underscored by the semichorus's emphasis on the crowd's obscene enjoyment. Samson kills the Philistians "While thir hearts were jocund and sublime, / Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine, / And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats" (1669–71). They are destroyed in a frenzy of unholy delight to which they have been provoked by God:

Among them hee a spirit of frenzy sent,
Who hurt thir minds,
And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for thir destroyer;
They only set on sport and play
Unwittingly importun'd
Thir own destruction. (1675–81)

The Philistians solicit their own destruction in a moment of "mad desire" that is at once an idolatrous rite and an orgy; God heightens this mad desire, encourages it, just as he hardened Pharaoh's heart in Exodus (7:3–5, 14:4).

The scene described by the semichorus resembles the description of the flood in *Paradise Lost*, another spectacle of riotous pleasure cut short by what Milton calls "Depopulation" (*PL*, 11.756). Michael shows Adam a scene of perverse enjoyment: "All now was turn'd to jollity and game, / To luxury and riot, feast and dance, / Marrying or prostituting, as befell, / Rape or Adultery, where passing fair /

Allured them" (714–8). On this scene descends "the Rain / Impetuous," until only the ark remains:

all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all thir pomp
Deep under water roll'd; Sea cover'd Sea,
Sea without shore; and in thir Palaces
Where luxury late reign'd, Sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabl'd. (743–44, 747–52)

If excessive enjoyment turns us into monsters, like those who drink from Comus's cup, then the sea-change imagined here reveals what has always been the truth of these places. A similar scene of pleasure interrupted by violence occupies the climax of Milton's sketch for a play titled "Sodom burning," where we see "the course of the city each evening every one with mistresse, or Ganymed, glittering along the streets." At this point, an angel appears "all girt with flames," and "calling to the thunders lightnings & fires he bids them heare the call & command of god to come & destroy a godlesse nation."⁴⁰ The ascription of this act to an angel rather than the direct agency of God draws out an ambiguity in Genesis, where we are told that "the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD in heaven" (19:24). What are we to make of this reduplication of "the Lord"? By insisting that it is an angel who acts, Milton perhaps suggests that those who do God's work can be said to *be* God, to embody the divine principle in action—a reading that diminishes the difference between God's acts and those of surrogates and thus creates space for human agents of the divine as well.

Samson Agonistes has recently been the subject of controversy over the question of whether we can read Samson's final act as the prosecution of a divine violence. In a September 2002 issue of *TLS*, John Carey compared Samson's suicidal mass slaughter of the Philistians to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Like the terrorists, Carey wrote, "Samson sacrifices himself to achieve his ends. Like them he destroys many innocent victims, whose lives, hopes, and loves are all quite unknown to him personally. He is, in effect, a suicide bomber."⁴¹ According to Carey, *Samson Agonistes* is a poem "usually interpreted as a work in praise of terrorism," and in some ways he seems to be right. "Milton's Samson is a soldier of God," Robert Fallon argues; to Laura Knoppers, "Samson embodies the violence for which the regicides could only call," after 1660; for Michael Lieb, the poem "extols violence," "exults in violence."⁴²

Carey never really discusses why “terrorism” is a useful term for thinking about this poem. The meaning of that word is notoriously difficult, as the outpouring of philosophical works after September 11 continues to demonstrate.⁴³ In most U.S. and U.K. public discourse—and I leave aside, here, the definitions propounded by various international organizations, as well as the insights of more philosophical analyses—two things have been said repeatedly about the current terrorism: that the terrorists are profoundly antagonistic to modern secular culture and to liberal democracy, and that they seek to impose, by fiat, a “premodern” social and political order, a theocracy in which all law will be divine law. The terrorists, according to this logic, sought on September 11 to attack the modern itself, and they did so in the name of God. The “war on terror” thus becomes an armed struggle between modernity and a premodern past.⁴⁴

I do not mean to offer any substantive claims about the motives or purposes of global terrorism now. What I want to trace is, rather, a certain discursive effect, in the aftermath of September 11, that links this moment to the seventeenth-century moment so often singled out as crucial for the genesis of a political modernity based on the sovereignty of competing nation states and on certain systems of international relations all centered on the state as the only legitimate political agent. This state system represents a version of the political founded on the principle of sovereignty and on a European balance of power usually said to have evolved in the treaties of Westphalia and Utrecht: the process of this history was to locate political power only with the state and thereby to exclude other political actors and other principles of the right to political action. This meant, perhaps above all, the exclusion of religion as the basis for a legitimate organization of political right.⁴⁵

One of the ways in which this exclusion was justified was through the genesis of a new discourse of “terrorism”—a discourse that rethinks the relations between sovereignty and the sacred and thereby seeks to produce a concept of modernity predicated on an act of exclusion that strangely links Milton and the “Turk.” Since September 11, it has been repeatedly said that the events of that day were *not* unprecedented, *not* unimaginable, in the sense that the images aired on television that day had already been produced as entertainment in any number of movies. From a longer historical perspective, those scenes were also not unprecedented in that they seemed to confirm what “the West” has been saying about Islam for a very long time. The idea of Islamic terrorism has had a long hold on the imagination of the west—a hold, I want to suggest, in fact coterminous with the ideology animating and enabling the very idea of “the West.”

The mid-seventeenth century represents a key moment in this history. Medieval and early modern texts imagined Islam first and foremost in terms of a seductive and fraudulent pleasure, a perversion of Christian truth. As I argued in chapter 3, the early modern history of contact with the Ottoman Empire also generated a discourse of "Turkish" political rationality, embodied in a supposedly calculating use of religion for state purposes, or even a sacrifice of religion to the state: thus Muhammad was said to have devised his religion to form scattered tribes into an empire-building people, or the Ottoman sultans were said to allow religious toleration in the interests of imperial power. But the means through which Muhammad produced this imperial regime was the offer of unbounded and illicit pleasures for men—polygamy, sodomy, the sensual paradise.

In the seventeenth century, this emphasis on the pleasures of Islam shifted in something like an opposite direction: from a voluptuary, the Muslim became a fanatic, an enthusiast whose felt proximity to the other world obliterates all contact with this one. Islam was still imagined as a religion devoted to empire. But this now meant imagining it as a cult of passion, of inspiration, of the sublime and fanatical conviction of direct access to the divine. The key to understanding Islam was not simply Muhammad's supposed imposture but his "epileptically Raptures and Ecstasies, and supposed revelations of Angels," or the "immoderate fasting" that drives him into "a perfect Lunacy, going up and down after an odd distracted manner," which—according to Lancelot Addison—his own wife interprets as "the Enthusiasms of an over-heated fancie."⁴⁶ Muhammad takes his place in a history of religious enthusiasm extending from the ancient Greeks to the modern Jesuits and Quakers.⁴⁷ From the debased servant of an all-embracing authority the Muslim becomes a dangerous revolutionary; from the sacred victim of divine violence, the romance "Saracen" who can be killed with impunity, the Muslim became the practitioner of that violence, a fanatic whose claim to inspiration threatens all political order.

The great theorist of this conception of Islam would also be the great modern philosopher of the state. "The religion of Islam," Hegel announces in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, "both hates and proscribes everything concrete; its God is the absolute One, in relation to whom human beings retain for themselves no purpose, no private domain, nothing peculiar to themselves." On the basis of this supposed indifference to human life, Hegel claims that "the religion of Islam is essentially fanatical." In his account, Islam emerges as a political theology antithetical to any established state or to any

rational political philosophy.⁴⁸ Islam plays a crucial role in Hegel's account of the history of religion, at once standing outside that history as a dead-end of religio-political development and authorizing the true direction of history, its evolution from the crudely embodied gods of ancient paganism through the sublime monotheism of the Jews to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation, which imagines a deity at once ineffable and material, divine and human, thereby—in Hegel's terms—reconciling the fundamental divisions of religious history and experience. Islam, with its intransigent iconoclasm, its absolute insistence on the gulf separating human and divine, represents at once a logical extension of Jewish theology, a competing monotheistic universalism, and a total negation of the historical path Hegel describes.

It is of course impossible to trace an absolute rupture, in the history of representations of Islam; for one thing, the older images seldom die away, but are supplemented by new ones. It is a question, rather, of differing emphases. These can perhaps be tracked by the changing fortunes of a medieval legend. According to Mandeville, one "Gatholonabes" built a pleasure garden in twelfth-century Syria, with halls "depeynted alle with gold and azure," populated by fifteen-year-old girls and "yonge striplynges" of the same age, and centering on three fountains "sett with precious stones and grete orient perles," running with milk, wine, and honey.⁴⁹ This "Gatholonabes" was one of the leaders of the Nizari Isma'ilite sect of Shi'a Islam, Hasan-e Sabbah, here perhaps confused with Rashid ad-Din, the Isma'ili leader who became known as the *shaykh al-jabal*, the "mountain chief" or the "old man of the mountain." Rashid ad-Din was notorious for teaching that the assassination of God's enemies was a religious duty; the purpose of the garden was to offer a glimpse of the rewards of martyrdom, as Marco Polo makes clear: "the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahomett gave of his Paradise."⁵⁰

In both Mandeville and Marco Polo, the erotics of the garden occupy the center of attention, juxtaposing this garden with the true paradise and imagining Islam, once again, as a carnal perversion of Christianity. The question of assassination is left largely to the side. But in the seventeenth century, these texts took on a new urgency precisely around the question of religious violence. As Edward Symmons wrote to the English rebels in 1648, "Your proceedings . . . speak you of a like Religion with the *Assassines* among the *Mahumetans*, who deeme it Sovereign devotion, puritie of manners, and the readiest way to Paradiſe, *for to kill those of a differing opinion to themselves*."⁵¹ From

a seductive garden like Alcina's island or the Bower of Bliss, the garden of the Isma'ilis became the site of an irrational and dangerous political theology.

This shift in the representation of Islam is also caught up with the changing fortunes of romance: where Mandeville and Marco Polo use a romance fiction to express the perversity of Islam, in Symmons it is the question of prosecuting divine violence that has become the illusion. The claim to be fighting God's fight—the claim that underwrites so much chivalric romance—has itself become a temptation. Despite its royalist uses, romance also became the object of a new critique that, with Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, turned it into a key term in the analysis of revolutionary zeal. As Victoria Kahn has argued, romance was for Hobbes a narrative form that also named a form of disruptive and unruly political imagination: romance is irrational, enthusiastic, and thus essentially pre-political, part of a world that has not yet conceived of a true science of politics. Hobbes associates romance with both aristocratic vainglory and puritan conscience, linking the "gallant madness of Don Quixote" to the preaching of radical sectarians.⁵² In an exchange with Hobbes prefacing *Gondibert*, William Davenant diagnosed the poetics of inspiration—so vital to Renaissance theories of poetry—as the source of a dangerously unruly form of fantasy that realizes itself in puritan enthusiasm and revolution. For Davenant, the "dissembling of Inspiration" begets a reverence that should properly be bestowed on the law, enabling the poets who "profess" this "fury" to "pretend authoritie over the people"—in a logic identical to that of the contemporary accounts of Muhammad's imposture.⁵³ Muhammad is at once an enthusiast and a romancer, hypocritically deceiving the world with the most improbable fictions, above all the fiction of the Qur'an as an inspired text.

Samson Agonistes represents Milton's most intense engagement with the politics of inspiration. The issues raised by the play are closely linked to the issues raised by the treatment of chivalric romance in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*: the theology of war, the relationship of human to divine violence, and, above all, the scrutiny of what it is to be—or to believe oneself—directly inspired by God. Although the play begins with a note theorizing its tragic form, its ending is regularly interpreted as moving beyond tragic experience toward a reconciliation with God's purposes in which Samson is restored to his heroic role, becoming again "Like *Samson*" (1710). If *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* project the redemptive plot of romance onto providential history, the "triumphant catastrophe" of *Samson Agonistes* returns us to the problem of individual action and its capacity to

channel a divine judgment and a divine violence, asking us to decide between tragic and providential readings of the play's ending.⁵⁴

The redemptive reading of the play depends on an affirmation of Samson's last, unrepresented act, an affirmation from which Carey seeks to rescue the play. In order to do so, Carey focuses on the divergences between Milton's narrative and its source. At the climax of the story in Judges, Samson, on display before the Philistines, prays for new strength: "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee" (16:28). A moment later, he devastates the temple. It is never made explicit, but the juxtaposition of this prayer with the fact of his renewed strength allows the reader to think that God has both sanctioned and enabled Samson's last act. In Milton's poem, on the other hand, Samson's strength has by this point already returned, so that the idea of destroying the temple is if anything the effect rather than the cause of his returning strength: "I begin to feel / Some rousing motions in me," Samson announces, but seems at this point not yet to know what this means (1381–82). In the scene at the temple, moreover, we are barred from the access to his thoughts given in Judges. We see him, from the remove of the messenger's account, leaning against the pillars, "as one who pray'd, / Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd" (1637–38). Is he praying or thinking? On this difference depends our capacity to differentiate a Samson who acts as a holy warrior from a Samson contemplating a human act of revenge. The poem gives us no way of knowing whether Samson thinks himself inspired by the divine, or, if he does, how we are to judge this feeling. We are left with something undecidable at the heart of the text, an absence where we most need to know.

As Carey points out, our perceptions of Samson's act are also filtered by the differing responses of the characters. Here, too, Milton introduces uncertainty. "All is best," insists the chorus, and Manoa celebrates not just the slaughter Samson perpetrates but even the "years of mourning" he has bequeathed the survivors (1745, 1712). But the messenger, who has seen what happened, responds very differently: "O whither shall I run, or which way fly / The sight of this so horrid spectacle / Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?" (1541–43). Here again, Milton presents us with an element of undecidability, an absence in the text.⁵⁵ Carey reads this absence as an invitation to critique Samson's act. And yet, the uncertainty remains: we are left, at the end, only with different responses, different readings. The play's conclusion seems designed to compel debate over a question to which it provides no clear answer. It embodies, as Stanley Fish writes, "an experience structured so as to leave unanswered the very questions it

raises.”⁵⁶ In Fish’s reading, this uncertainty paradoxically solicits the most radical certainty, an ungrounded certainty that is an act of faith, not the result of any process of reasoning. “By refusing to limit the possibilities open to God by the possibilities conceivable to man,” he writes, Samson “affirms his belief in a benevolence whose kind is *not* always known and the evidence of which is *not* always seen or understood” (418). The only standard we have for evaluating Samson’s act is Samson’s own desire to conform to the divine will (426). In this, the poem embodies what Fish calls the “Miltonic paradigm”: “the might of faith, the might of affirming in the absence of evidence or against evidence a bottom-line reality that, once affirmed, orders the world in its every detail” (81). Faith creates the meaning of the acts done in its name: they are not acts “performed according to a norm” but acts that create new norms, new realities (89).

In this book, as everywhere in his Milton criticism, Fish refuses to see any political content in this “Miltonic paradigm.” But I want to suggest that what Fish describes as a pure epistemology or theology is political to its core, that it is, in fact, recognizable as a *definition* of the political, the definition offered by Carl Schmitt in his book on sovereignty: “the sovereign is he who decides the exception.”⁵⁷ The law may include a provision for its own suspension, for the declaration of a state of emergency, but such a state is by definition exceptional, indefinable. The decision to suspend or abrogate the law—the decision that, for Schmitt, defines sovereign power—must be made in the absence of any norm. Whether or not we can agree with Fish that this is a “Miltonic paradigm,” we can already say, against Fish, that it is not apolitical, but that with this conception of a decision founded on no norm and no process of reason we are already dealing with the operation of a power that suspends all normal juridical and constitutional functioning: that is, we are dealing with the problem of the state of emergency, of the crisis of the revolution after 1649, and with the theories of natural law through which the early modern period attempted to think the exception—theories Schmitt used in his own work.⁵⁸

The question of the exception goes to the heart of Milton’s political theory. In *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, Milton begins by making what looks like an argument for an existing contract between king and people. He writes that “the power of Kings and Magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferr’d and committed to them in trust from the People,” and sets political authority under the aegis of the law: “as the Magistrate was set above the people, so the Law was set above the Magistrate” (*CPW*, 3.202, 200). All political questions are referred to the law, which is in turn derived from a contractual

relationship between king and people. But Milton's argument only looks legal: what he in fact does is to subsume all questions of law to the demands of religion. The ground of his argument is revelation rather than law, a declaration that does not accommodate itself to any human norm but is itself a way of constituting a new norm. *The Tenure* promises to prove, as its title announces, "That it is Lawfull, and hath been held so through all Ages, for any, who have the Power, to call to account a Tyrant." But Milton then dismisses those who spend their time "disputing presidents, forms, and circumstances, when the Common-wealth nigh perishes for want of deeds in substance, don with just and faithfull execution" (3.194). Precedents are set aside in favor of acts done with "execution." The promised genealogy of the right of tyrannicide in fact turns on the assertion of a "human power to execute, not accidentally but intendedly, the wrath of God upon evil doers," the power of a people "to execute Gods judgements upon thir King" (197–98, 224).

What the *Tenure* offers is not legal reasoning but the demand for "execution." In this, the announced method—the summoning of precedents—is reversed:

if the Parlament and Military Council doe what they doe without precedent, if it appeare thir duty, it argues the more wisdom, vertue, and magnanimity, that they know themselves able to be a precedent to others. Who perhaps in future ages, if they prove not too degenerat, will look up with honour, and aspire towards these exemplary, and matchless deeds of thir Ancestors. (237)

Even if rebellion can be justified by precedent, the trial and execution of a king cannot; but then we must jettison precedent, must discard law and the valorization of acts in conformity to established models in favor of acts that will be models for the future. If the law contradicts what God demands, so much the worse for the law. What validates a republican politics is the human decision to enact God's will, even against a world of established political forms. The tract thus ends not with a legal point driven home but with a Messianic prayer:

Therefore he who is our only King, the root of *David*, and whose Kingdom is eternal righteousness, with all those that Warr under him, whose happiness and final hopes are laid up in that only just & rightful kingdom (which we pray uncessantly may com soon, and in so praying wish hasty ruin and destruction to all Tyrants) cev'n he our immortal King, and all that love him, must of necessity have in abomination those blind and lame Defenders of *Jerusalem*; as the soule of *David* hated them, and forbid them entrance into Gods house. (CPW, 3.256)

The initial “therefore” is a ruse: none of this follows from what Milton has written but, logically, precedes it. The ground of the law is a claim to inspiration that reorders the political world into two parties, those who “Warr under” Christ and those who will remain cast out of all true human community. If Schmitt theologizes politics, Milton politicizes the theological.⁵⁹

This is the purpose of Milton’s frustration of certainty in *Samson Agonistes*. We cannot know what happened to Samson in the temple; we must make the decision either to read this as a liberatory violence sanctioned by the divine or as a desperate act of revenge, an irrational violence that any ordered political regime must seek to contain. To register the political immediacy of this decision, we should look to a sermon preached by Stephen Marshall at the advent of the first civil war. Marshall, the “SM” of the Smectymnuus Milton would defend later that year, took as his text Judges 5.23: “*Curse ye Meroz (said the Angell of the Lord) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the helpe of the Lord.*” The context of this passage, Marshall explains, is war between the Israelites and the Canaanites, which the people of Meroz refused to enter. “*All people,*” Marshall writes, in a passage marked out in the margin as “The maine Doctrine,” “*are cursed or blessed according as they do or do not ioyne their strength and give their best assistance to the Lords people against their enemies.*”⁶⁰

In Marshall’s hands, the text of Judges becomes an incitement to what seem to be the most barbaric acts. As he writes, reading Psalm 137,

What *Souldiers heart* would not start at this, not only when he is in *hot bloud* to cut downe *armed enemies* in the *field*, but afterward *deliberately* to come into a subdued *City*, and take the *little ones* upon the *speares point*, to take them by the heeles and beat out their *braines against the walles*, what inhumanity and barbarousnesse would this be thought? Yet if this worke be to revenge Gods Church against *Babylon*, he is a *blessed man that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones.*⁶¹

What are we to say to this lovingly detailed description of violence against a civilian population and even against infants? We are being invited to imagine a massacre that is not only sanctioned but sacred: “he is a *blessed man that takes and dashes the little ones against the stones.*” Is Marshall advocating this act? Presumably not. The conditions of enunciation of a sermon confine these remarks to scriptural interpretation and not to direct political injunction. Moreover, the text is conditional. It tells us not that these *are* sacred acts, here and now, but that under certain circumstances what otherwise appears to

be the greatest inhumanity *becomes* sacred. In what looks like a striking anticipation of Kierkegaard's reading of the story of Abraham and Isaac, all ethical evaluation is made to depend absolutely on the divine will: nothing, even the greatest brutality, is in itself wrong. But it is also true that the circumstances of the sermon's delivery—before a parliament that was at that moment gathering an army—press the exegetical act to the brink of something else.

Marshall also makes a tiny but transformative alteration in his text. Psalm 137 is a lament of the conquered Israelites who are being taken to Babylon; here are its final lines in the Geneva text, which Marshall seems to have used: "O daughter of Babel, worthie to be destroyed, blessed shal he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast serued vs. / Blessed shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy children against the stones."⁶² The threat of the murder of children, here, is the threat of a retaliatory violence, as is quietly signaled by that word, "thy." There is an implicit emphasis here: this is the fantasy of a dispossessed people who have seen their own children massacred. These lines relive a trauma. But Marshall alters that word and so lifts the psalm from its context of exile and loss: "he is a blessed man that takes and dashes *the* little ones against the stones."⁶³ That slight shift decontextualizes the threatened violence so that it circulates as an infinitely possible violence, a violence that might emerge at any moment and in any place, a violence that seems to have no reason behind it except for "*divine Authority*" (B3r).

This sermon, Marshall warns his listeners, is on "A Text and Theme exceeding *seasonable*" (B2v). He does not spell out why it is so seasonable, simply reminding the Commons that "the exigence of the Church at this present time requires from you many other things."⁶⁴ But those on the other side of this conflict had no trouble reading Marshall's words as an incitement to holy war. In the preface to one of his sermons, Edward Symmons recounts how he visited a group of imprisoned parliamentary soldiers and asked them about "their taking up of Armes against their *Soveraigne*"; the prisoners responded that they had taken up arms "against *Antichrist*," citing Psalm 137.⁶⁵ In his sermon, Symmons pursues a paradox, arguing that those who think they are soldiers of God are by that very fact God's enemies. The puritans believe their acts of violence are "acts of Religion" (E4v), but they have "acted both the part of the *Chaldeans*, and the *Moabites* too, against *Israell*; both of *barbarous* Enemies and of *treacherous* neighbours" (G3v). As Symmons writes elsewhere, "we daily find in *England*, what our poor captive Brethren do feel at *Argier*, that *there is no such cruel Turk as the Renegado Christian*."⁶⁶

The royalists insisted that the puritan revolution was only a new instance of an earlier use of religion to sanction violent rebellion. On May 7, 1649, just months after the king's execution, George Thomason purchased a copy of the first English translation of the Qur'an, a translation produced from a French text by Alexander Ross, once Charles's chaplain and a client of William Laud.⁶⁷ The first sentences of Ross's letter to the reader link this book to the history of civil war:

There being so many Sects and Heresies banded together against the Truth, finding that of *Mahomet* wanting to the Muster, I thought good to bring it to their Colours, that so viewing thine enemies in their full body, thou mayst the better prepare to encounter, and I hope overcome them. It may happily startle thee, to finde him so to speak *English*, as if he had made some Conquest on the Nation, but thou wilt soon reject that fear, if thou consider that this his *Alcoran*, (the Ground-work of the *Turkish* Religion) hath been already translated into almost all Languages in Christendome . . . yet never gained any Proselyte, where the Sword, its most forcible, and strongest argument hath not prevailed. (A2r-v)

Ross's Mahomet is almost instantly legible as a figure for Cromwell. He leads an army of "Sectaries" and claims that his victories are acts of God (2D1r). He speaks the languages of republicanism and holy war, asserting that it was "the will of God, that all men should enjoy their Liberty," and promising that "whosoever dyed in that holy Warre, his soul should be instantly transported to Paradise" (2D1v). "In reading the *Alcoran*," Ross writes, "we shall see what is the force of superstition, and with what violence men are carried headlong in the defence and maintenance even of the most absurd and impious opinions" (2F1v). After the Restoration, Lancelot Addison echoed Ross, arguing that Muhammad "so well managed his tyranny and injustice, under the cloak of Religion, as never any have yet proved his equal," with one exception, one modern copy: "the nearest and most exact Transcript of this great Impostor, was the late Usurper" (D2r). Addison follows Ross in calling Muhammad's followers "*Sectaries*" and describes his proselytizing as "Conventicling" (A2r, E5v).

The royalists consistently depicted the Parliamentarians as fanatics who used the claims of inspiration to justify rebellion. "Few sects professing Christ," Joseph Jane wrote in response to *Eikonoklastes*, "have appeared more Turkish, then these present of England, they fancie an earthly Kingdome for the Church, as Mahomett his Paradise, and then, that themselves are the true Church, and shall have Dominion

over all.”⁶⁸ In his character of “An Hypocritical Nonconformist,” Samuel Butler writes that

the *Turk's* Patriarch *Mahomet*
Was the first great *Reformer*, and the Chief
Of th'ancient *Christian* Belief,
That mix'd it with new Light, and Cheat,
With Revelations, Dreams, and Visions,
And *apostolic* Superstitions,
To be held forth, and carry'd on by *War*;
And his Successor was a *Presbyter*.⁶⁹

Butler's *Hudibras* repeatedly links Muhammad's revolutionaries to the puritans: his Presbyterian anti-hero is “the Renegado Knight,” professes a “fierce Religion / Like *Mahomet's*,” and compares himself to “a valiant *Mamaluke*” who has fought “in the same Cause.”⁷⁰ Davenant's *Gondibert* similarly suggests that the desire for inspiration has led some to the Qur'an: “The Curious much perus'd this, then, new Book; / As if some secret ways to Heav'n it taught” (N1r). In 1652, the Qur'an was again a “new Book,” having been published in English three years earlier. The claim to divine inspiration justifies political revolution, in seventeenth-century England as in seventh-century Arabia.

The rhetoric of revolutionary inspiration troubled not only Parliament's enemies but also its friends. In “The First Anniversary,” Andrew Marvell linked Fifth Monarchist radicalism—imagined as a “frantic army” mustering heresies—to Islamic enthusiasm: “Oh Mahomet! Now couldst thou rise again, / Thy falling-sickness should have made thee reign, / While Feake and Simpson would in many a tome, / Have write the comments of thy sacred foam.” Muhammad's supposed epilepsy becomes the epitome of a frenzied religious radicalism. The millenarian interpretations of English sectarians, Marvell concludes, are “prophecies fit to be *Alcoraned*.”⁷¹

In 1656, Francis Osborne—a republican, an avid reader of Machiavelli, and a relative by marriage of William Draper, through whom he attained a minor post in the commonwealth government—published a volume titled *Political Reflections*, a series of discourses the first and longest of which addresses “the government of the Tvrks.” Osborne applies to Islam Machiavelli's thinking about the place of religion in the establishment and maintenance of a state. While religion is for Machiavelli an essential element in the maintenance of public order—since the state that keeps to its religion will also keep itself “good and united”—it is also the greatest means of encouraging rebellion.⁷² For Osborne, the example of Muhammad

reveals both the power of a carefully maintained public devotion and the power of religious zeal for those who would overthrow the state. The early Muslims looked on their neighbors “as Enemies to God, and so, like the *Canaanites*, fit only to be eradicated,” and in this spirit they built an empire that they have since defended by defending their religion.⁷³ Religious fanaticism produces the violence required to found a new state and a new system of law, and also seeks to control the continued violence that must maintain that order. “An indiscreet *zeale*,” Osborne writes, “doth so farre participate of the qualities of the Aire over-heated, that it hatcheth the Plagues of *Rebellion*” (A10v–A11r).

What concerns Osborne is the capacity of zeal to produce what Walter Benjamin called founding violence, the violence that both abrogates and establishes the law: as Jacques Derrida writes, in a reading of Benjamin, “the very emergence of justice and law, the instituting, founding, and justifying moment of law implies a performative force, that is to say always an interpretative force and a call to faith.”⁷⁴ The establishment of any political or legal order is itself an act of faith, and for this reason Osborne fears extremes of religious passion. Enthusiasm here plays a role like that played by pleasure in Milton: both concepts interpret England’s recent history in terms of political *feeling*, the affective ties sustaining and motivating political choices.

The power of zeal is that it activates a kind of political fantasy, a relay between the passions of the individual and the largest geopolitical designs:

Phansy, but a weake shell in it selfe, yet if fill’d with Sulphureous zeal, and the opinion of Truth and future Happinesse, confounds not only all that dare appeare in opposition of it, but the very Designe (if capable of so much prudence and moderation as to project one) that she intended to promote. Therefore such as consider, how far the *Turks Conquests* are indulged by their *Religion*, have more cause to wonder, they are not masters of the whole world, then that they enjoy such a proportion thereof, as they doe. (C9r)

Meric Casaubon’s attack on enthusiasm similarly grounds itself on the political dangers of inspiration: “the opinion of divine Inspiration,” he writes, has been “the occasion of so many evils and mischiefs . . . as no other error, or delusion of what kind soever, hath ever been of either more, or greater.”⁷⁵ While Casaubon emphasizes the Greek origins of these mystical frenzies—he targets erudite Platonism, as well as more popular forms of religious fervor—Islam appears as their telos: the Greeks invented enthusiasm, but “the enthusiastick *Arabs*” perfected

it, "the very same that bred us *Mahomet*" (H8r). Mystical raptures, Casaubon suggests, end in Islamicizing, and Muhammad is either a frenzied visionary or an impostor manipulating an enthusiastic people (K2v).

This notion of political "*Phansy*," which inscribes an intimate relationship between Islam and the radical Protestant sectaries, opens up the long history of enthusiasm, from Locke to Kant to Hegel and beyond. In this history, the English Revolution plays an important part, as does one of the central political texts of the period, Hobbes's *Leviathan*. One of the key terms of Hobbes's analysis is "passion," an emotion that slides easily into madness and rage. Without passion we are dead, and yet with "extraordinary and extravagant Passion" we are a danger to ourselves and others.⁷⁶ If all passions are dangerous, however, much more dangerous are the passions of those "that are possessed of an opinion of being inspired." When many such "conspire together, the Rage of the whole multitude is visible enough," and they will "clamour, fight against, and destroy those, by whom all their life-time before, they have been protected, and secured from injury." Enthusiasm fans "singular Passions" into the "Seditious roaring of a troubled Nation" (140–41).

For Hobbes, this "Enthusiasm" will be the undoing of all political institutions. To believe in personal inspiration from God and to believe that such inspiration should itself inspire political action is for him already to establish a new sovereign power, is already a revolutionary act.⁷⁷ The belief that sanctity is not to be attained by "*Study and Reason*" but by "*supernaturall Inspiration*" demolishes all political peace, such that "private men as pretend to be supernaturally Inspired" pass judgment on political questions, "to the Dissolution of all Civill Government" (366–67). "When Christian men," Hobbes writes,

Take not their Christian Sovereign, for Gods Prophet; they must either take their owne Dreams, for the Prophecy they mean to bee governed by, and the tumoour of their own hearts for the Spirit of God; or they must suffer themselves to bee lead by some strange Prince; or by some of their fellow subjects, that can bewitch them, by slander of the government, into rebellion. (469)

It is not enough to refuse the politics of inspiration: Hobbes appropriates the sacred for the state. "There is need of Reason and Judgment to discern between naturall, and supernaturall Gifts," he writes (466). But "reason" turns out to be something of a ruse: only "when the Prophet is the Civill Sovereign, or by the Civil Sovereign

Authorized,” can belief safely be offered. It is power that distinguishes true from false prophets. “Some men,” Hobbes asserts, “have pretended for their disobedience to their Sovereign, a new Covenant, made, not with men, but with God,” but this is “unjust,” because “there is no Covenant with God, but by mediation of some body that representeth Gods person; which none doth but Gods Lieutenant, who hath the Sovereignty under God” (230).

In this way, Hobbes infuses the state with a kind of divinity, placing sovereign power beyond all law, all norms, all juridical processes. We here pass beyond the opposition between political reason and fanaticism, to recognize how the theory of sovereignty, even in its repudiation of divine inspiration, nevertheless preserves at the core of the state a kind of hidden theology, the continuing trace of a relationship to the divine. If Milton goes beyond the question of justice to a messianic authorization, Hobbes seeks to capture the sacred as the exclusive preserve of the state. Both are equally radical in emphasizing the limits of the law. “The Sovereign is the sole Legislator,” Hobbes writes, the sole figure who “maketh the Law,” and even preexisting law takes its force immediately from the current sovereign: “it is not Length of Time that maketh the Authority” of any established law, “but the Will of the Sovereign signified by his silence” (313). For Hobbes, as for Milton, precedent means nothing.⁷⁸ Where Milton grounds political action in the inspired moment of decision, Hobbes locates it in a state power that at once produces the law and remains unconstrained by it. But both, in their different ways, produce a political theology, a politics that resolves its contradictions by an appeal to the divine.⁷⁹

This is the aporia that *Samson Agonistes* opens up: the choice between a state that conceals its arbitrary claim to power under the form of law but is in fact unconstrained by law, and the inspired revolutionary embrace of a divine violence that may be, from another perspective, terrorism, endless political chaos, genocide. The play forces an intense confrontation with the claims of divine inspiration, with the possibility of a sacred politics; but it also exposes in the most radical way the connections between law and violence, between any established political order and the incalculable act of violence that produces it. This is what Samson’s act calls us to attend to, the moments of a foundational violence that, as Derrida writes in “Force of Law,” are terrifying not only because of the suffering and destruction that attend them but also because “they are in themselves, and in their very violence, uninterpretable or undecipherable” (269). The question of *Samson Agonistes* is the question of revolutionary violence or, rather,

of a violence that seeks to rupture all forms of human law or ethics, to pass beyond them and to reach the standpoint of a divine violence capable of rearticulating all political relations, of transforming the very ground of the political.

It has been tempting, in the critical history of *Samson Agonistes*, to understand the poem as a fantasy of revenge.⁸⁰ What are we to make of the fact that the messenger's speech culminates in line 1659 and the chorus's response to his description of the massacre—"O dearly bought revenge, yet glorious!"—takes place in line 1660? Are we being invited to dream of a similar, post-Restoration act of destruction? The problem with such a reading lies in the aporia of the text itself, the way it leaves the moment of tragic violence unrepresented and perhaps unrepresentable. It also leaves us with the knowledge that in neither case—Israel or England—will there in fact *be* a revolutionary moment. Samson's last act does not contribute, in the end, to any revolutionary history, as we are invited to recognize even by Manoa's otherwise rapturous response to the messenger's relation: "To *Israel*," he asserts, Samson has left honor and freedom, "let but them / Find courage to lay hold on this occasion" (1714–16). They will not, as we may suspect, since Samson has already described Israel's insufficient commitment to its own liberty. Early in the text, he recounts how the people of Judea, "to prevent / The harass of thir Land" (257), handed him over to "the uncircumcis'd" (260). This event leaves him unsurprised, as it should leave unsurprised any reader of Milton:

what more oft in nations grown corrupt,
And by thir vices brought to servitude,
Than to love Bondage more than Liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
And to despise, envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favor rais'd
As thir Deliverer. (268–74)

We can see here again the strange but intimate links between between the spectacle of a degraded voluptuousness—whether that of the conquering Philistians drunk in their temple or of the Israelites who choose ease over freedom—and a violence that seeks radically to transform the very stakes of well-being, prosperity, justice, peace.

We are left with a disjunction between the promise made to Samson and what he accomplishes: "Promise was that I / Should *Israel* from *Philistian* yoke deliver" (38–39). At the play's end, this deliverance remains unaccomplished, and Samson's violent act,

abortive, futile. This futility, this sense that we are confronting a failed revolution, a failed founding violence, opens up perhaps the most disturbing perspective on Milton's poem. If Samson's final act is the mark of his redemption, as is often claimed, then we cannot close our eyes to the violence that is the cost of that redemption: we are being asked, by this reading, to assent to something like a pure violence, a violence that is simply the expression of contact with the divine, beyond any other expectations. Such a reading asks us to will this moment even knowing its futility, to assent to a violence that remains beyond all human justice and all human reason.

However we read the final moments of *Samson Agonistes*, there is clearly something intensely troubling here; I cannot help feeling that too much criticism of the poem aims at resolving a difficulty that Milton leaves unresolved. What is so troubling about this poem is the way it forces us to confront a version of the political defined around the irruption of divine violence, and in so doing risks the further recognition of the violence at the heart of any established political order: Milton calls into question the possibility of anything like a political modernity, if that modernity is defined—as in Hobbes—by the exclusion of all claims to inspiration, the exclusion of divine violence, or, rather, the exclusion of all divine violence except that embodied in the state itself.

The possibility of divine violence in *Samson* opens up a wider reading that recognizes in the seventeenth century a moment of crisis and transformation in both the representation of Islamic difference and the self-understanding of Europe. It opens up, in particular, the history of a Europe struggling to free itself from the religious wars that were paralyzing Christendom. This is a long history, one that in no sense can be said to have been completed in the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, I want to suggest that the mid-seventeenth century elaboration of a new discourse of "enthusiasm" represents a crucial moment in the emergence of a conception of European political modernity. With the enthusiasm of Hobbes and Casaubon we are approaching Hegel's notion of fanaticism, Gibbon's description of the "intrepid souls of the Arabians," "fired with enthusiasm," or—at a greater remove, but still in a clear line of descent—contemporary claims about Islamic terrorism.⁸¹ The cost of the effort to exclude religious violence from a reconstituted understanding of the political was the production of a discourse of fanaticism that translates into new forms the old antagonism of Christian and "Turk": the assault on radical sectarianism reinscribes Islamic difference as that which cannot be assimilated, that which remains always beyond the pale.

The question of religious difference is dissolved into the antimony between reason and enthusiasm, political modernity and a supposedly premodern irrationality; but, at the same time, the fact of religious difference, of the difference of “Turks” from Christians, secretly underwrites the whole system. In effect, Islam becomes the stand-in for Europe’s disavowal of its own premodernity, the name for everything Europe has refused in imagining itself as Europe. The production of the Muslim as a figure antagonistic to all modernity was the result, in the seventeenth century, of a political struggle over the question of divine violence. European modernity constituted itself through that act of exclusion.

After that moment, romance became something other than it was. From the genre that narrates Christian and “Turkish” difference, it became itself something premodern, exotic, alien, even atavistic. Where in the sixteenth century the attack on romance was part of a generalized anti-Catholic and iconoclastic initiative, by the eighteenth century romance embodied not simply theological error or moral scandal but a fundamentally foreign mentality. Romance’s own mechanisms of othering were in effect turned against it. Orientalists published collections of “eastern” stories such as the *Thousand and One Nights*; poets explored the sublimity of “eastern” passion, sensuality, and violence; and Warton speculated about the Arab origins of romance, sensing in it something alien to the Europe he thought he knew. The conditions for the Romantic reclamation of both romance and “the east” were established in a moment of crisis that produced romance and the east as fundamentally other. Romance may in fact have Arab, Persian, or Turkish origins, concealing within itself a history of cross-cultural transmission and the fading memory of now-lost contact zones in Spain, Sicily, and France.⁸² But the emerging eighteenth-century sense of the “oriental” qualities of romance, with the corresponding romanticization of Islam, also represents the work of cultural differentiation, another relay between changing representations of the “Turks” and changing and contested articulations of Christian and European identity. In this shifting history of romance, we can trace an important history of Europe, in the early modern moment.

Milton’s moment also opens onto our own moment, when images of Islamic fanaticism are again being circulated in order to provide cover for the most radical transformations of state power, citizenship, and the rule of law. In this moment, the so-called war on terror underwrites a wide range of anti-democratic initiatives: a series of wars fought in the name of a democracy under attack by its self-proclaimed

defenders; a massive expansion of executive authority; the systematic dismantling of civil liberties and the cultivation of new forms of surveillance; the violation of the Geneva Convention and all other legal and ethical restraints on the use of torture in the interrogation of prisoners; and the elaboration of legal categories such as the “enemy combatant,” a figure in effect deprived of all legal status, whether of the citizen, the prisoner of war, or even the suspect of a crime. All of these actions are justified by necessity, “the Tyrant’s plea” (*PL*, 4.394). The current regime asserts that a state of emergency licenses any number of violations or rewritings of the law, domestic and international, as well as the creation of spaces like Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, or any number of secret detention sites, which are effectively beyond the reach of all constitutional norms and processes, blank spots in which we do not know what is happening and in which law and justice seem to have no hold on the operations of power. As Giorgio Agamben writes, “Bush is attempting to produce a situation in which the emergency becomes the rule, and the very distinction between peace and war (and between foreign and civil war) becomes impossible.”⁸³

Both the seventeenth-century moment and our own moment, by insisting so strenuously on the antagonism between state power and the violence unleashed by fanatical non-state actors, at once assert in new ways the state’s exclusive right to administer and control violence, and threaten to reveal a kernel of irrational and sacred violence within state power: a new state terror counterposes itself to the putatively premodern and atavistic terror of Islamic extremism. In this sense, our current moment, which threatens to undo all of the work of modern constitutional politics and international human rights law, returns us to the crisis moment of the seventeenth century, itself a moment when human political relations were being decisively reshaped. It should be no surprise that in this crisis, it is again the story of “Islam and the West” that occupies so much attention: as I hope I have shown, the very possibility of “the West”—a tenuous, troubled, and troubling dream—is itself predicated on the early modern encounter with Islam and with the production in that encounter of a certain notion of European modernity. The specter of Islamic terror both makes and unmakes the possibility of that modernity, providing once again the cover for a radical reworking of the stakes of domestic and international political relations. On the one hand, it enables the most barefaced attack on all forms of civil and human rights, all legal constraints on state power. On the other hand, it exposes the contradictions that have haunted the discourse of political

modernity since the seventeenth century. In this sense, the so-called war on terror—a war by and of terror—enters into a strange constellation with the early modern moment in which some of the most fundamental narratives of political modernity were struggling uncertainly with other ways of imagining the world.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, 3.4.74; *Orlando Furioso*, ed. Lanfranco Caretti, 46.80.
2. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 177.
3. On the semantics of these words, see below; at this point, it is enough to note that, although in many ways distinct, “Moor,” “Turk,” and “Saracen” converge in having as one of their meanings what we would mean by “Muslim.”
4. Hathaway, *Marvels and Commonplaces*, pp. 109–32.
5. Fuchs, *Romance*, p. 16; Heng, *Empire of Magic*, pp. 1, 3; and Cooper, *The English Romance in Time*, p. vii.
6. I do not want to discount the importance of other versions of romance, perhaps most significantly Greek romance, itself the product of an era of expanding trade and colonization: see Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus*.
7. *Anatomy of Criticism*, pp. 186–87.
8. Giosepppe Malatesta, qtd. from Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, p. 1062.
9. *Othello*, 1.1.134. For Cervantes, see McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, pp. 274 and 279; Frye, “Forward,” in Logan and Teskey, *Unfolded Tales*, p. ix; for Foucault, see below.
10. *The Secular Scripture*, pp. 139 and 142.
11. Linton, *The Romance of the New World*; Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*; and Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishman in the Age of Discovery*.
12. Heng, *Empire of Magic*, esp. pp. 17–61.
13. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, pp. 25–44. Also, Barbour, *Before Orientalism*; Burton, *Traffic and Turning*; Dimmock, *New Turkes*; and Matar, *Islam in Britain 1558–1685*.
14. Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab*.
15. *The Three Ladies of London*.
16. *The totall discourse, of the rare aduentures, and painefull peregrinations*, L1r.
17. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, p. 93; Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, p. 31; and Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, pp. 11–12.
18. Chaudhury, *Asia before Europe*, and Frank, *ReOrient*, p. 119.

19. See the discussion of *Richard Coeur de Lion* in Blurton, *Cannibalism*.
20. *A Commentarie of M. Doctor Martin Lyther vpon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galatians*, 2A4v.
21. Ross, *The Alcoran of Mahomet*, A2r–v.
22. *The Siege of Rhodes* (London, 1482 or 1483), John Rylands Library, shelfmark 3494. A facsimile of this copy has been published (New York: Da Capo, 1970). All citations are to this edition.
23. For a wider discussion of such “reformations” of the material text, see my article, “‘Darke speech’: Matthew Parker and the Reforming of History,” pp. 1061–83.
24. For the first reading, see Linton, *The Romance of the New World*, and Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration, 1298–1630*; for the second, Parker, *Inescapable Romance*, and Quint, *Epic and Empire*.
25. *Orientalism*. Said distinguishes modern “Orientalism,” as a practice of knowledge intimately tied to power, from a “poetic geography” that he discovers in Shakespeare, Dante, and Euripides, and that for him is without real history.
26. Ghandhi, *Postcolonial Theory*, p. 77; Loomba, *Colonialism-Postcolonialism and Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism*; and Said, “Orientalism, an Afterward,” pp. 32–59. Robert Young remarks that the critique of Said has become a rite of passage, in *Postcolonialism*, p. 384.
27. *The Location of Culture*, pp. 66–84 and 85–92.
28. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*; Burton, *Traffic*; Dimmock, *New Turkes*; MacLean, “Ottomanism before Orientalism?,” pp. 85–96; Matar, *Islam in Britain*; and Vitkus, *Turning Turk*.
29. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, and Vitkus, *Turning Turk*.
30. Knapp, *An Empire Nowhere*.
31. Andrews demonstrates the close connections of trade and piracy in *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*.
32. Burton, *Traffic*, and Jardine and Brotton, *Global Interests*.
33. *Global Interests*, pp. 32, 42. Contrast Subrahmanyam, “The Company and the Mughals between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris,” pp. 143–72.
34. For example, Asad, *Formations of the Secular*; Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity*; and Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History*.
35. For the claim that “postcolonialism” should be understood as a stance rather than a theory, see Quayson, *Postcolonialism*.
36. Davies, *Europe*, p. 9.
37. Hale, “The Renaissance Idea of Europe,” pp. 46–63, and Hay, *Europe*, pp. 72 and 95–96.
38. Etienne Balibar takes this kind of conflictive unity as a model for the world, in *We, the People of Europe?*, pp. 224–25.
39. Pagden, “Introduction,” and Pocock, “Some Europes in Their History,” in Pagden, *The Idea of Europe*, pp. 1–32 and 55–71; also, Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. On the states system, see Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society*.

40. *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, pp. 93, 387.
41. Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*.
42. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.
43. *Afterlives of the Saints*, p. 38.
44. Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, p. 105.
45. Lukács, *The Historical Novel*; Benjamin, *The Origins of the German Tragic Drama*.
46. Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*, pp. 69, 92; Stewart, *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*, p. 252. Mikhail Bakhtin similarly explores what he calls "genre memory," the idea that a genre remembers the history of its past uses: see Gary Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, pp. 292, 297, 307.
47. Guillén, *Literature as System*, p. 159. For accounts of genre that emphasize generic mixtures and generic mutations, see especially Colie, *The Resources of Kind*, and Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*.
48. Linton, *Romance*, and Harris, *Sick Economies*.
49. Greene, *Unrequited Conquests*; Howard, *Theater of a City*; Lesser, "Tragical-Comical-Pastoral-Colonial"; and Zucker, "Laborless London," pp. 94–119.
50. Cohen, "Between Form and Culture," p. 26.
51. On this process of "formal sedimentation," see Jameson, *Political Unconscious*, pp. 140–41.
52. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, p. 11; Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, p. 88.
53. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, p. 3; Jameson, "Magical Narratives," p. 161.
54. *The Winter's Tale*, ed. J.H.P. Pafford, 5.3.116–17. On romance anachronism, see Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*, and Henderson and Siemon, "Reading Vernacular Literature," p. 218.
55. Vives, *The Instruction of a Christen Woman*, qtd. from Cooper, *The English Romance in Time*, p. 37.
56. Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, I3r–v.
57. Newcomb, *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England*.
58. Teskey, "Introduction," in Logan and Teskey, *Unfolded Tales*, pp. 1–15.
59. Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Vol. 2, pp. 712, 954–1073.
60. "Between Romans and Romantics," p. 215.
61. Ker, *Epic and Romance*, pp. 4, 354, 351; Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, pp. 242 and 245.
62. *The Order of Things*, pp. 48 and 43.
63. *The Adventures of Don Quixote*, trans. J.M. Cohen, p. 57.
64. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, p. 28, quoting Marx.
65. McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, p. 65; Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*, p. 16; and Frye, in Logan and Teskey, *Unfolded Tales*, p. ix.

66. This combination of meanings is registered through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the words “secle” and “siecle,” for which the *OED* provides definitions ranging from “A century, or an age,” to “an age or period,” to “the world.”
67. Monod, qtd. in Pecora, *Secularization and Cultural Criticism*, p. 5; see also Blumenbeg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, and Löwith, *Meaning in History*.
68. Along with Löwith, *Meaning in History*, and Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, see also Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, and Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, pp. 1–34.
69. Said cites Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism*, p. 29.
70. *Orientalism*, p. 122. The notion of secularization is a crucial reference point for Said’s conception of the task of the critic: see, for example, *Culture and Imperialism*, pp. 43–61.
71. In *Edward Said and the Religious Effects of Culture*, William D. Hart argues that Said “emplots Orientalism as a romance,” p. 65.
72. Compare Blumenberg’s theory of the “reoccupation” of religious terrain, in *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*.

1 “SECRET FAITH”

1. Munday, *The Fovntaine of Fame*, H3v.
2. Ephesians 6:11; for uses of this passage, see Gates, *The Defence of Militarie profession*, Glv, and Mallette, *Spenser and the Discourses of Reformation England*, pp. 147–48.
3. *The ofspring of the house of Ottomanno*, A4v.
4. Anon., *The Estate of Christians, living vnder the subiection of the Turke*, A3r.
5. Knutson, “Elizabethan Documents, Captivity Narratives, and the Market for Foreign History Plays,” pp. 102–03.
6. On Anglo-Ottoman relations, see Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–82*, pp. 11, 19–20; on the Muscovy Company, see K.R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*; on Morocco, see chapter 2.
7. This appears to be the only custom woodcut in the book: see Luborsky and Ingram, *A Guide to English Illustrated Books, 1536–1603*, Vol. 1, p. 586.
8. *Doctor Faustus*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter, p. 361; Dürer, *Apocalipsis cu[m] figuris*, in Mende et al., *Die Drei Grossen Bücher*, image 2.
9. *Purchas his Pilgrimage*, 2D1v. A seventeenth-century reader copied this passage into Folger MS V.a.381, p. 9.
10. *The true reporte of the prosperous successe which God gaue vnto our English souldiours*.
11. Haigh, *The English Reformations*, pp. 285–95.
12. Of these, thirty-one were killed in late 1588, and thirty-five between 1577 and 1585: see Haigh, *The English Reformations*, p. 263.

13. Hamilton, *Anthony Munday and the Catholics, 1560–1633*, pp. xvi–ii, xxi–ii.
14. Bancourt, *Les Musulmans dans les Chansons de geste du cycle du roi*, Vol. 1, pp. 2–29, 113–14; Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens*, pp. 25–26, 107–16, 131, and 140–41; and Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*, pp. 117–219.
15. OED, “Mahound,” and Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens*, pp. 131, 140–41.
16. “The Romaunce of the Sowdone of Babylone,” in Hausknecht, *ed.*, *The English Charlemagne Romances Part V*, ll. 86 and 137, and ll. 2497–510.
17. See “Mary Magdalen,” in Baker et al., *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS. Digby 133 and E Museo 160*.
18. *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, 1.10.40.
19. Kaske, *Spenser and Biblical Poetics*, p. 101.
20. In Geoffrey of Monmouth, J.S.P. Tatlock writes, there are “fourteen oriental and southern princes who are allies or vassals of the Romans”: *The Legendary History of Britian*, pp. 112–14, 138–39, 261–62, 284–85, and 287–88. Malory’s Arthur also fights a strangely Saracen Rome: see Malory, *Works*, ed. Eugène Vinaver, pp. 116–17.
21. *A Preface to The Faerie Queene*, p. 228. But see Fuchs, “Spanish Lessons,” pp. 43–62, and McCabe, “The Fate of Irena,” in Coughlan, *Spenser and Ireland*, p. 112.
22. *Inescapable Romance*, p. 61.
23. *Orlando Furioso*, trans. Barbara Reynolds, pp. 46.140.
24. Ross, *The Custom of the Castle*, p. 77.
25. Much of this material draws on earlier French texts: see Desportes, *Rodomonts Infernall* and Gaultier, *Rodomontados, Or, Brauadoes and Bragardismes*.
26. Parker, *Inescapable Romance*; Quint, *Epic and Empire*.
27. Tommaso Campanella linked the problem of unity to the narrative of crusade in his reading of Tasso: Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Vol. 2, p. 1068.
28. Tasso, *Poesie*, ed. Francesco Flora, 8.6–25 and 43. Fairfax renders the word as “Dane”: see Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, ed. Lea and Gang. I quote this passage from *Jerusalem Delivered*, trans. Ralph Nash.
29. The Lutheran Diets repeatedly postponed grants of military aid to the emperor until the resolution of religious questions, forcing Charles V to offer concessions. See Fischer-Galati, *Ottoman Imperialism and German Protestantism, 1521–1555*. For prophecies of Turkish invasion, see Setton, *Western Hostility to Islam and Prophecies of Turkish Doom*.
30. See Gless, *Interpretation and Theology in Spenser*, p. 190, and Fowler, *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, p. 53.
31. 5.2.6, 9, 10. For Neff, see *The Works of Edmund Spenser*, ed. Heffner, Vol. 5, pp. 345–47.

32. *Mandeville's Travels*, ed. Letts, Vol. 1, p. 25. On *Bevis* and *Huon*, see King, *The Faerie Queene and Middle English Romance*, pp. 61–62 and 103.
33. "A brefe Relation of my Travell," qtd. from *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, ed. Brent, p. 73. On the *acemi oglan*, see chapter 3.
34. See Upton's commentary, in *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, ed. Upton, Vol. 2, pp. 623–26; Aptekar, *Icons of Justice*, pp. 82–83 and 218–19.
35. Daunce, *A Briefe Discovrse of the Spanish State*, E3r.
36. Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095–1588*, p. 362. On the late history of crusade, see also Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571*, and Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580*. The hanging of the banners is specifically mentioned by Upton, *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, Vol. 2, p. 625.
37. For Greville, see chapter 3; for the "style" of Suleiman and Philip II, see Huntington MS EL 6162, f. 31v.
38. 5.8.25–26. See King, *The Faerie Queene and Middle English Romance*, pp. 203–06, and Aptekar, *Icons of Justice*, pp. 122–27.
39. Daniel, *Islam and the West*, pp. 126–28.
40. This point was first made by Douthé, "Mahomet cardinal," pp. 233–43.
41. *La Commedia*, ed. Petrocchi, Vol. 2, p. 28.35.
42. Qtd. from Hudson, *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 107. I have expanded thorn into "th."
43. Qtd. from James, *Society, Politics, and Culture*, p. 350, n. 171. See Dimmock, *New Turkes*, pp. 22–54.
44. See Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation*; Göllner, *Tvrčica*, Vol. 3, pp. 171–215; and Segesvary, *L'Islam et la Réforme*.
45. This claim was among the positions for which Luther was condemned by the papacy on June 15, 1520: see *D. Martin Luthers Werke*, Vol. 1, pp. 534–35. Subsequent references to this edition will be abbreviated WA.
46. During the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1529, both Luther and Melanchthon argued that the crisis was evidence of the necessity of reform. See WA 30/2: 81–148 and 149–97, and Buchanan, "Luther and the Turks," pp. 145–60.
47. WA 30/2: 141–42: "[D]er Bapst [ist] nicht viel frumer und sihet dem Mahometh aus der massen ehlich, denn er lobet auch mit dem munde die Euangelia und ganze heilige schrift, Aber er helt, das viel stück drinnen und eben die selbigen, so die Turcken und der Mahometh zu schwer und ummüglich achten . . . [Er regieret] auch nicht mit dem Euangelio odder Gottes wort, sondern hat auch ein new gesetz und einen Alkoran gemacht nemlich sein Decretal, Und treibt dasselbige mit dem Bann, gleich wie der Turcke seinen Alkoran mit dem Schwerd."
48. WA *Tisch-Rede* 1: 135 and 3: 158–59. Luther and Melanchthon sponsored the publication of books on Islam: for Luther, see WA 30/2: 207–09 and WA 53: 261–396; for Melanchthon, see Melanchthon,

- Philippi Melanthonis Opera quae supersunt omnia*, 3: 440 and 9: 1026–027 (future references to this edition will be abbreviated CR).
49. *Apocalipsis cu[m] figuris*, image 15.
 50. “Confrontation between the Roman Church and the Infidels, with Christ Preaching in the Background,” reproduced in Strauss, *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut 1550–1600*, Gerung image 32.
 51. The polemic finds elaborate expression in Reynolds and Gifford, *Calvino-Turcismus*, and Sutcliffe, *De Tyrropapismo*.
 52. Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes*, Vol. 2, sigs. 2G4r–2L2v.
 53. 2K5v. Foxe adapts a passage from Melanchthon’s *In Danielelem prophetam commentarius*, CR 13: 823–980; see also Joye’s *The Expositio[n] of Daniell*, P8v.
 54. *The Image of bothe Churches*, A2v.
 55. *A Commentarie of M. Doctor Martin Lyther vpon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galatians*, 2A4v.
 56. For example, “The Sowdone,” lines 240–41: “The kinge of Fraunce I shal the bringe / And the xij dosipers alle in fere.”
 57. *The Scholemaster*, I3r–v.
 58. 1.2.13. For the Whore, see Revelation 17:4 and the glosses to the Geneva edition.
 59. *The Pageant of Popes*, L6v.
 60. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus: or, Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 8: 25; Fuller, *The Historie of the Holy Warre*, C4v; *1 Henry IV*, ed. David Scott Kastan, 5.3.46.
 61. 1.3.17. But see King, *Spenser’s Poetry and the Reformation Tradition*, pp. 54–56.
 62. 1.7.7. See *Orlando Furioso*, 46.140.
 63. *The Analogy of The Faerie Queene*, p. 77; also, Hieatt, “The Projected Continuation of *The Faerie Queene*,” pp. 335–47.
 64. 3.3.50; Revelation 22:10, qtd. from Geneva text of 1560.
 65. The word “Sabaoth” appears twice in the Bishop’s Bible, but in the Geneva text is both times rendered as “hostes” (Romans 9:28–29, James 5:4); see Nohrnberg, *The Analogy of The Faerie Queene*, p. 83.
 66. *Tamburlaine*, ed. J.S. Cunningham, Part Two, 4.3.116–24.
 67. Leslie, *Spenser’s “Fierce Warres and Faithfull Loves,”* pp. 52–56.

2 LEAVING CLARIBEL

1. Smith, “H.D.’s ‘The Tempest,’” in Hulme and Sherman, *“The Tempest” and Its Travels*, pp. 25–26.
2. I will use the word “exogamy” to describe this mode of romance, although in the versions of it most important to this chapter, it is the man who is the stranger; however, no satisfactory alternative presents itself: “miscegenation,” crucially, brings its own problems, since the issue here is precisely the emergence of racial thought.
3. *The Tempest*, ed. Stephen Orgel, 2.1.69–70.

4. *The Tempest*, ed. Christine Dymkowski, p. 7.
5. For example, Wells, "Shakespeare and Romance," in Brown and Harris, *Later Shakespeare*, pp. 49–80. Studies of Shakespearean romance generally concentrate on Greek romance: see, for example, Gesner, *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance*.
6. Shakespearean romance, like Fletcherian tragicomedy, has also been read in terms of constitutional debate: see James, *Shakespeare's Troy*, pp. 220–21.
7. Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*, pp. 136–87.
8. Heng, *Empire of Magic*, pp. 188–89, 226–36. On the missionary impulse, see Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*.
9. King, *The Faerie Queene and Middle English Romance*, p. 61.
10. On cosmopolitan Venice, see Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities*, Vol. 1, p. 315; Contarini, *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, B1r; and Platt, "The Meruailouse Site," pp. 121–54.
11. *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. John Russell Brown, 3.3.30–31.
12. Jessica's story—and the story of the Saracen princess—is also a version of a wider fiction of male fortune-hunting and clandestine marriage: see Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter*, pp. 224–32.
13. The act of conversion can also be imagined as enacting a racial transformation. See Heng, *Empire of Magic*, pp. 226–36.
14. Spiller, "From Imagination to Miscegenation," p. 156.
15. *The Tragedye of Solymán and Perseda*, ed. John J. Murray, p. xiii.
16. Leinwand, *Theatre, Finance, and Society in Early Modern England*, p. 120.
17. *Seneca his tenne tragedies*, T2r.
18. On Colchis, see also Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. David Grene, 2.104.
19. S1v; *Tragedies*, trans. John G. Fitch, ll. 301 f.
20. T1v; *Tragedies*, trans. John G. Fitch, ll. 820–21.
21. S6r; *Tragedies*, trans. John G. Fitch, ll. 610–13. See also Gillies, *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference*, pp. 99, 135–37.
22. Stephen Greenblatt notes that Hakluyt includes a redacted text of Mandeville in the first edition of his collection, but drops it from the second edition; see *Marvelous Possessions*, pp. 30–31. But Geoffrey of Monmouth's Arthur appears in both editions, and the 1599 edition is in fact reorganized to *begin* with Arthur.
23. On this plot and the links between romance and global commerce, see Harris, *Sick Economies*, pp. 10–11.
24. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, pp. 62–122.
25. *The Second Part of Vox Populi*, B4r; see Lesser, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication*, p. 212.
26. Daunce, *A Briefe Discovrse of the Spanish State*, E3r, F1v.
27. *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, in *The Works of Edmund Spenser*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw et al., Vol. 9, p. 91.
28. Poole, "The Politics of Limpieza de Sangre," pp. 359–89.

29. March 21, 1579: see Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 62.
30. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, pp. 75–76 and 191–93.
31. Qtd. from Pears, “The Spanish Armada and the Ottoman Porte,” pp. 445–46.
32. Fisher, *Barbary Legend*, pp. 76 and 127.
33. Qtd. from Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 37. See also Hess, “The Moriscos,” pp. 19–21.
34. Letter of October 25, 1579, qtd. from Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 69.
35. *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*, p. 251.
36. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 23. See also Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, p. 8.
37. Qtd. in Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 84.
38. D’Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama*, pp. 23–27.
39. *The Second Volvme of the Principal Navigations*, 3F3r–v. See D’Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama*, pp. 18–20.
40. D’Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama*, pp. 27–38. See also Matar and Stoeckel, “Europe’s Mediterranean Frontier,” in Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe*, pp. 225–34.
41. *The Second Volvme of the Principal Navigations*, *3v.
42. *A Declaration of the True Cavses of the Great Trovbles*, C8v, B3r, D1r. See Dimmock, *New Turkes*, pp. 163–67.
43. *The Principal Navigations*, *2v, *3v.
44. On the role of imports in the development of English trade, see Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, pp. 3–50.
45. *The totall discourse, of the rare aduentures, and painefull peregrinations*, L1r. On the currant trade, see Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, pp. 66–68.
46. *The three ladies of London*, B2v.
47. *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, 1.3.131–46.
48. Hathaway, *Marvels and Commonplaces*, pp. 113, 117–18, and 165.
49. A.C. Bradley calls Othello “by far the most romantic of Shakespeare’s heroes”: *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 177. See also Hays, *Shakespearean Tragedy as Chivalric Romance*, p. 155, and Rose, “Othello’s Occupation.”
50. Guilfoyle, “Othello, Otuel, and the English Charlemagne Romances,” pp. 50–55.
51. For Cinthio, see Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, Vol. 8, p. 246.
52. *Othello*, ed. M.R. Ridley, gloss to 3.4.70, and Kermode’s gloss to 3.4.72 in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans.
53. *Othello*, ed. Norman Sanders, gloss to 3.4.68; *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, 3.4.74; *Othello*, ed. Michael Neill, 3.4.71. See

- Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays*, pp. 183 and 305 n. 4, Shaheen, "Shakespeare's Knowledge of Italian," pp. 165–66, and Potter, *Othello*, p. 9.
54. On the Ottoman claim to Rome, see Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 3G2r.
 55. Shakespeare may also be drawing on Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, which rewrites Ariosto's narrative to culminate with the union of Orlando and Angelica, as part of an English imperial fantasy. See Hays, *Shakespearean Tragedy as Chivalric Romance*, pp. 184–90.
 56. I have adapted Barbara Reynolds's translation, *Orlando Furioso*, 46.80, which renders Ariosto's "furor profetico" as "Prophetic powers."
 57. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, pp. 103–06; see also Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, p. 252.
 58. "Othello and the Conventions of Romantic Comedy," pp. 128 and 140.
 59. Orgel, "Making Greatness Familiar," pp. 41–48.
 60. *The Political Works of James I*, ed. Charles H. McIlwain, p. 272. On marriage as a political metaphor, see Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, pp. 212–18 and 223.
 61. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp. 156–57 and 314–38.
 62. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*; also, Fincham and Lake, "The Ecclesiastical Policy of King James I," pp. 169–207.
 63. *Political Works*, p. 278.
 64. *The Peace-Maker*, B1v; see also Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, p. 296.
 65. Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare*, p. 122; *Hymenaei*, in Jonson, *The Complete Masques*, ed. Stephen Orgel, ll. 91 and 410–12.
 66. *The Alchemist*, qtd. from *The Alchemist and Other Plays*, ed. Gordon Campbell, 1.2.25–26; Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, pp. 248–50.
 67. Larkin and Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, Vol. 1, p. 73.
 68. *A Sermon Preached before the late King James*, C2v. This polemic apparently created trouble with James; see the letter of apology appended to the text of the sermon, especially D3r.
 69. "The Lepanto," in *His Maiesties Poeticall Exercises at Vacant Houres*, N4r–v; *His Maiesties Lepanto, or Heroicall Song*, A2r, B1r. In the 1570s, Knolles traveled to Douai "in the Catholic cause," as Kenneth McRae puts it: see Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, trans. Richard Knolles, p. A53. McRae believes that Knolles subsequently either converted or conformed, though there does not seem to be any clear evidence on the issue.
 70. Murphy, "A Note on Iago's Name," pp. 38–43; Everett, "'Spanish' Othello: The Making of Shakespeare's Moor," pp. 101–12; and Griffin, "Un-Sainting James," pp. 58–99.

71. Loomba, "'Delicious traffick,'" in Alexander and Wells, *Shakespeare and Race*, pp. 208–09.
72. Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama*, and Iyengar, *Shades of Difference*.
73. *A Restitvtion of Decayed Intelligence*. I discuss Verstegan, race, and religion, in "John Foxe and the Anglo-Saxons," in Highley and King, *John Foxe and His World*, pp. 54–72.
74. Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama*, p. 140; Neill, "'Mulattos,' 'Blacks,' and 'Indian Moors,'" in *Putting History to the Question*, pp. 269–84; and Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism*, pp. 92–93 and 104–10.
75. *The Limits of the Human*, pp. 2–6.
76. *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, Etc.*, Vol. 1, p. 224.
77. 5.1.41–51; see *Metamorphosis*, trans. Arthur Golding, 7.263–89, and James, *Shakespeare's Troy*, pp. 212–16.
78. *The nauigations, peregrinations, and voyages*, B4r.
79. Rawlins, *The famous and wonderfyll recoverie of a ship of Bristoll*, B3r, B4r; Fuller, *The Historie of the Holy Warre*, 2N4r.
80. *The true travells, adventvres, and observations*, H6r–v.
81. Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*, pp. 118–38.
82. Linton, *The Romance of the New World*, pp. 10, 155–56, and James, *Shakespeare's Troy*, p. 194.
83. This process is also suggested by the presence of *The Aeneid* as an informing subtext; see especially the promise of an exogamous union that concludes that text, *The Aeneid*, ed. Robert Fitzgerald, 12.257–59 and 1131–36. On Shakespeare's rewriting of Virgil, see James, *Shakespeare's Troy*, p. 196.
84. Kastan, *Shakespeare after Theory*, pp. 183–97; *The Tempest*, ed. Orgel, pp. 30–31.
85. *Henry VI Part Three*, ed. Randall Martin, 2.1.71; *Henry V*, ed. T.W. Craik, 3.7.5.
86. *The Winter's Tale*, ed. J.H.P. Pafford, 2.2.3; *Cymbeline*, ed. J.M. Nosworthy, 2.3.141–43.

3 UNFINISHED ROMANCE

1. *The Countess of Pembork's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Jean Robertson, p. 3; *The Faerie Queene*, ed A.C. Hamilton, p. 737.
2. "A Dedication to Sir Philip Sidney," in Greville, *The Prose Works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke*, pp. 91–92.
3. *Orlando Fvrioso in English Heroical Verse*, §4v.
4. Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 82–96; Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, pp. 24–43; and Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*.
5. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558–1640*, pp. 228, 235.

6. *Old Arcadia*, pp. 11, 358–59.
7. Compare *Old Arcadia*, pp. 66–71 and 152–58, with *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. Victor Skretkowicz, pp. 205 f.
8. Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics*, pp. 140–54, and Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, pp. 210–17.
9. “Dedication,” p. 3. This presumably refers to Greville’s extended retirement from politics, 1604–14: Rebholz, *The Life of Fulke Greville*, pp. 156–59.
10. Bowers, “‘What Is the Meaning of this Work?’” pp. 85–96, 86–91.
11. Kinney, “Chivalry Unmasked,” pp. 35–52; Worden, *The Sound of Virtue*, pp. 355–69; and Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558–1640*, pp. 226–35, 299.
12. Nicholas Moffan, jailed in Turkey from 1552 to 1555, apparently learned this story from a fellow captive. After his release, he published it as *Soltani Solymanni Turcarum Imperatoris horrendum facinus* (n.p., 1555). William Painter seems to have translated it into English around 1558; twenty-two years later, he included a translation in *The second Tome of the Palace of Pleasure*, 2V5r–2X7v. Hugh Goughe also translated Moffan, in Georgijevic, *The offspring of the house of Ottomanno*, I5r–M3v. See also Knolles, *Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 3T1r–3T5r.
13. 3T1r. On Roxolana, see Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*, pp. 58–59.
14. Bullough, *Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville*, Vol. 2, pp. 25–40, and Rebholz, *The Life of Fulke Greville*, 101–08, 132–36, and 200–05. The published texts are *The Tragedy of Mustapha* and *Certaine Learned and Elegant Workes*, N4r–Z4v.
15. *Certaine Learned and Elegant Workes*, P3r–v, P4r.
16. Z1r. On resistance theory, see Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots*, pp. 68–77 and 250–54, and Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy*, chapter 2.
17. X1v; Z1r. On Greville and Essex’s rebellion, see Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics*, pp. 298–315.
18. Both quoted in Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy*, p. 48.
19. See Bacon’s arguments, in Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy*, pp. 89–90.
20. Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution*, pp. 139–44; Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy*, pp. 46–49, 80–90, and 106–11; and Sommerville, *Royalists and Patriots*, pp. 134–75.
21. Rebholz, *The Life of Fulke Greville*, p. 336, and Greville, *Prose Works*, pp. xxii–xxiv.
22. Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War and Parliaments and English Politics*.
23. P4v–Q1r. On early Stuart politics and mixed government, see Lesser, “Mixed Government and Mixed Marriage,” pp. 947–77.
24. *The Mirror of Herototus*, p. 324.
25. *The Politics*, ed. Stephen Everson, Book 7, §7.

26. For the connections between tyranny and perverse desire, see Hartog, *The Mirror of Herototus*, pp. 330–39, and Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*, p. 9.
27. *Laws*, 694a–96b, qtd. from *The Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns.
28. On gender, the harem, and despotism, see Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*, and Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot*.
29. Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 3T2v; Georgijevic, *The offspring of the house of Ottomanno*, 18r.
30. *The Faire Maid of the West*, G4r. The women of the seraglio, Ottaviano Bon wrote, “are all young virgins taken and stolen from forraign Nations”: *A Description of the Grand Signior's Seraglio*, C2v.
31. These passages appear in an epilogue to Knolles's history that derives closely from the work of Giovanni Botero: see *The Travellers Breviat*, also published as *The Worlde*, F4v. On Botero, see Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 65–67.
32. Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 5F2r. See also *The Ottoman of Lazaro Soranzo*, E3v.
33. C2r; see also E2r–F4r. Thomas Gainsford writes that these children would become “the principall beame of the whole Empires frame,” *The Glory of England*, O5r.
34. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, p. 68. On *devsirme*, see Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, and Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*.
35. *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq*, Vol. 1, pp. 154–55.
36. Sandys, *A Relation of a Iourney*, M1v–M2r. For Eldred, see Hakluyt, *The Second Volvme of the Principal Navigations*, Z2v–Z3r.
37. *The Totall Discourse, Of the Rare Aduentures, and painefull Peregrinations*, R3v.
38. On the *millets*, see Braude, “Foundation Myths of the Millet System,” in Braude and Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. 1, pp. 69–88, and Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*.
39. *Formations of the Secular*, pp. 190, 192–93; also, Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, esp. pp. 29, 53–54, and 200–08; and Christin, *La paix de religion*.
40. *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, H6v (Book 1, chapter 8).
41. For Schmitt, see Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, esp. p. 101.
42. *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, pp. 2–3.
43. For example, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, pp. 158–59, 211–12, and 378.
44. *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, S4v. See also Le Thiec, “L'Empire ottoman, modèle de monarchie seigneuriale dans l'œuvre de Jean Bodin,” in Pérouse et al., *L'Oeuvre de Jean Bodin*, pp. 55–76.
45. This may mark a divergence from the *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, which seems to distinguish between the monarchies of Asia and Africa and those of Christendom, p. 204.

- Julian Franklin argues for a change of direction between the two texts, in response to the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, in *Jean Bodin and the Rise of Absolutist Theory*, pp. 23, 41.
46. *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, 3P5v; compare the *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, p. 272. In Bodin's *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, the Muslim convert Octavius writes a tragedy about Mustapha; see p. 233.
 47. *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, p. lxix.
 48. See also Giffel, "Toleranzkonzepte im Islam und ihr Einfluß auf Jean Bodins *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*," in Häfner, *Bodinus Polymeres*, pp. 119–44.
 49. *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*, pp. 14–15.
 50. For example, Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*.
 51. Kaviraj and Khilnani, *Civil Society*.
 52. Harvey, *The Letter-book of Gabriel Harvey*, pp. 79–80.
 53. On Grotius, see Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 78–108, and Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp. 139–54.
 54. *De Iure Belli*, p. 3.
 55. *De Iure Belli*, Vol. 2, p. 44.
 56. *Hobbes, Locke, and Confusion's Masterpiece*, p. 137.
 57. On pirates, see pp. 17, 294–96, and 794; on the right of punishing violators of natural law, pp. 504–06, 513, and 794–95.
 58. Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 169–79, and *De Iure Belli*, p. xiii.
 59. *De Iure Belli*, pp. 54, 44, 45.
 60. *Trve Religion Explaining and Defended*.
 61. Qtd. from Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 193–94.
 62. *Beyond the Anarchical Society*.
 63. Sonnets 1 and 51; see *Certaine Learned and Elegant Workes*, 2A1r, 3E3r.
 64. Sonnet 90, 2K3r–v; see also my comments on both of these poems in "Returning to Egypt."

4 "STRANGE COMMODITIES"

1. Massinger, *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, ed. Edwards and Gibson, Vol. 2, 1.1.2.
2. Bynum, "Wonder," pp. 1–26; Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150–1750*, pp. 88–108; and Hathaway, *Marvels and Commonplaces*.
3. Byam, sermon published as the second of two in *A Retvrne from Argier*, Ll v.
4. Carleton, *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain 1603–1624*, ed. Lee, p. 270. For an argument that similarly links *The Renegado* to a Laudian context, see Neill, "Turn and Counterturn."
5. *A Voyage into the Levant*, Al v.

6. Dallam, "A brefe Relation of my Travell," in *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, ed. Brent, pp. 14–15.
7. Rawlins, *The Famous and Wonderful Recoverie of a Ship of Bristol*, B2r.
8. Barker, *A Trve and Certaine Report of . . . Capitaine Ward and Danseker*, A3v; *Ward and Danseker, Two Notorious Pyrats*, B1r.
9. Anon., *Ward and Danseker*, D1v, D2v.
10. Qtd. in Parker, "Preposterous Conversions," p. 6.
11. Daborne, *A Christian Turn'd Turke*, in Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*, 13.52–55.
12. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 2F2r.
13. *A Treatise of Commerce*, A3v–A4r.
14. Arthur Symons, qtd. from Garrett, *Massinger*, p. 230; see also pp. 82 and 165–66.
15. *The Blessed Revolution*, pp. 281–83.
16. Parker, *The Thirty Years' War*, pp. 42–63.
17. Yonge, qtd. from Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution*, p. 32; see generally pp. 16–20, 29–53, and Lake, "Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s," pp. 805–26.
18. Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, and Adams, "Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624," pp. 139–71.
19. See Limon, *Dangerous Matter*.
20. Bishop, qtd. from Lockyer *Buckingham*, p. 199. On the Petition of Religion and the French Match, see Adams, "Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624," pp. 157–58 and Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, chapter 3.
21. *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, ed. Edwards and Gibson, Vol. 2, pp. 7–9.
22. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*; and Walsham, "The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited," pp. 620–51.
23. On Laudianism and Arminianism, see Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* and Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 435–39.
24. Sutcliffe, *The Petition Apologeticall of Lay papists*, D4r, and *De Tyrrecopismo*.
25. Montague, *Apello Cæsarem*, a2v.
26. Q1r; compare Montagu, *The Acts and Monuments of the Church before Christ Incarnate*, B2r–v. For Whitgift, see *The Works of Richard Hooker*, Vol. 5, p. 288.
27. *Meletius sive De iis quae inter christianos convenient epistola*, p. 105, translation modified: the last phrase of Grotius's Latin reads, "ad Turcas et Barbarorum gentium colluviem verteremus," p. 76. See also Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp. 140–52.
28. See the preface to Page's translation of Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, 3*1v–3*2r.
29. *Apello Cæsarem*, Q1r–v.
30. *Acts and Monuments*, 2S2r.

31. Qtd. from Cardini, *Europe and Islam*, p. 147.
32. Barlow, *The Symme and Substance of the Conference*, E2r.
33. Qtd. in the preface to Bacon's "Advertisement Touching a Holy War," in *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Spedding et al., Vol. 7, p. 4.
34. According to Fisher, *Barbary Legend*, the story of Barbary piracy is in large measure a story of distortion, scapegoating, and ideological fantasy.
35. Hebb, *Piracy and the English Government*, pp. 43, 60–63.
36. See Buckingham's letter to Gondomar on August 6, 1620, qtd. from Hebb, *Piracy and the English Government*, p. 74.
37. *A Game at Chesse* (n.p., nd.), E4v–F1r.
38. "A Form of Penance and Reconciliation of a Renegado," in *The Works of Joseph Hall*, Vol. 12, pp. 346–50.
39. On Jews and puritans, see Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, pp. 22–23.
40. On "negative popery," see Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 63–72.
41. *The Plays of Philip Massinger*, ed. William Gifford, Vol. 2, p. 122; Dunn, *Philip Massinger*, pp. 177–79 and 184–91; and Lawless, *Philip Massinger and His Associates*. Edwards and Gibson are unconvinced: *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, Vol. 1, p. xlv.
42. Gifford, "Introduction," in *The Plays of Philip Massinger*, Vol. 1, p. xlv.
43. Some of this could derive from Massinger's Spanish sources. See Edwards and Gibson, *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger*, Vol. 2, pp. 2–4.
44. *The English Roman Life*, p. 105.
45. 5.1.135–40. See *Jerusalem Delivered*, trans. Anthony M. Esolen, 12.66–69. Lay baptism was the subject of controversy at the Hampton Court Conference: see *The Symme and Substance of the Conference*, B4v, C3v–D1v.
46. Dunn, *Philip Massinger*, p. 177.
47. For a reading of the play as producing the fantasy of a stateless transnational merchant community, see Harris, *Sick Economies*, p. 157.
48. For an effort to connect the possibility of a Laudian *Renegado* to Massinger's politics, see my article, "Caroline Politics, the Turks, and Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*," in Farmer and Zucker, *Localizing Caroline Drama*.
49. *Merchants and Revolution*, pp. 293–94.

5 FROM PLEASURE TO TERROR

1. *The Scholemaster*, I3r–v.
2. "Of the Origins of Romantic Fiction in Europe," in Warton, *The History of English Poetry*, Vol. 1, p. i. See also Fuchs, *Romance*, pp. 103 and 117.
3. *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, Etc.*, Vol. 1, p. 224.
4. *His Very Self and Voice: Collected Conversations of Lord Byron*, p. 503. Thanks to Peter Manning for this reference.

5. Jones, "An Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations," in *The Works of Sir William Jones*, Vol. 4, pp. 527–48.
6. Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England*, pp. 4–6, 154–81, and 243–55; Colas, *Civil Society and Fanaticism*; and Pocock, "Enthusiasm," pp. 7–28.
7. *Elements of Philosophy*, qtd. from Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, p. 142.
8. For example, McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740*, esp. pp. 25–90.
9. Adamson, "Chivalry and Political Culture in Caroline England," pp. 161–97.
10. Jardine and Brotton, *Global Interests*, p. 180.
11. Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 223–51; Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation*, pp. 159–202; Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writings*, pp. 72–112; and Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England*, pp. 233–49.
12. *Eikonoklastes*, qtd. from *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Don M. Wolfe, 3.367. Future citations will be abbreviated CPW.
13. Burrow, *Epic Romance*, pp. 244–89; Lewalski, "Milton: Revaluations of Romance," pp. 55–70; Patterson, "Paradise Regained," pp. 187–208; and Quint, *Epic and Empire*, pp. 268–340.
14. *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, 2.7.65–66; Quilligan, *Milton's Spenser*, pp. 46–78.
15. Giamatti, *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic*.
16. *Orlando Furioso*, trans. Barbara Reynolds, 6.21.
17. *Van Dyck: A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings*, ed. Barnes et al., figs. IV.48, 50, 51, and 58.
18. *Jerusalem Delivered*, 16.30.
19. *The Totall Discourse, Of the Rare Aduentures, and painefull Peregrinations*, 2E4v; on the location of paradise, see 2D1v–2D2v.
20. *al-Qur'an*, 55.46–78; Sandys, *A Relation of a Iourney begun An: Dom: 1610*, F6r–v.
21. *Pvrchas his Pilgrimage*, 2A1v.
22. *Paradise Lost*, 4.742–43, 767–70, qtd. from Milton, *The Complete Poems and Major Prose*. All citations to Milton's poetry will refer to this edition. References to *Paradise Lost* will be abbreviated PL; references to *Paradise Regained*, PR.
23. Mukerji, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles*, pp. 124–25.
24. PL, 4.248; *Othello*, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, 5.2.348–49.
25. OED, "balm," and Edwards, *Milton and the Natural World*, pp. 182–98.
26. Pliny, trans. Philemon Holland, *The historie of the world: commonly called, The naturall historie*, 2K2v–2K3v.
27. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578–1582*, p. 177.
28. Barrera, "Local Herbs, Global Medicines," pp. 165–66.
29. PL, 5.449; 4.742–43, 690. *Faerie Queene*, 2.12.72, 58.

30. For the suggestion that Pandemonium was modeled on St. Peter's at Rome, see Smith, "The Source of Milton's Pandemonium," pp. 187–98.
31. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants*.
32. For the close connections between Levant Company and East India Company merchants and the crown, see Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, p. 712.
33. King James Version, 1 Samuel 8:5; *The Ready and Easy Way*, CPW 7.449–50.
34. *The Political Works of James Harrington*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock, pp. 605 and 400. See also my essay, "Returning to Egypt: 'The Jew,' 'the Turk,' and the English Republic."
35. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, p. 172.
36. Fish, *Surprised by Sin*, pp. 162–80.
37. *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, qtd. from *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, Vol. 9, p. 145.
38. *Homo Sacer*, pp. 75–86. Compare Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, p. 297.
39. Schwartz, *Remembering and Repeating*.
40. *The Works of John Milton*, Vol. 18, pp. 233–34.
41. "A work in praise of terrorism?" p. 15; see also Guttenplan, "Is Reading Milton Unsafe at Any Speed?" Late in the process of revising this chapter, I read Feisal G. Mohamed's fascinating essay, "Confronting Religious Violence," pp. 327–40.
42. Lieb, *Milton and the Culture of Violence*, p. 237; Fallon, *Captain or Colonel*, p. 238; Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton*, p. 56.
43. For example, Jacques Derrida, in Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, and Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*.
44. This is a rhetoric that occludes all substantive political, economic, and social issues and aims to short-circuit any critique of U.S. policies. See Bilgrami, "Occidentalism, the Very Idea."
45. "The seventeenth century," Victoria Kahn writes, "is the period in which scholars have located the emergence of a distinctively modern conception of political obligation": *Wayward Contracts*, p. 1.
46. Casaubon, *A Treatise concerning Enthusiasme*, K2r–v; Addison, *The First State of Mahumedism*, L8v–D1r, D2v.
47. Brown, *Quakerisme The path-way to Paganisme*, F4r.
48. *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3.243.
49. Qtd. from *Mandeville's Travels*, pp. 200–01.
50. *The Travels of Marco Polo*, 1.140. See Daftary, *The Assassin Legends*.
51. *A Vindication of King Charles*, 2S2v.
52. Qtd. from Kahn, *Wayward Contracts*, p. 142; see generally pp 134–70, and also Smith, "The Source of Milton's Pandemonium," pp. 159–60.
53. *Gondibert*, B5v; Zwicker, *Lines of Authority*, pp. 17–26; and Guillory, *Poetic Authority*, p. 15.

54. Martz, *Poet of Exile*, p. 286.
55. Haskin, *Milton's Burden of Interpretation*, chaps. 5 and 6; Wood, "Exiled from Light"; and Shawcross, *The Uncertain World of Samson Agonistes*.
56. Fish, *How Milton Works*, p. 392.
57. *Political Theology*, p. 5. The connection between Schmitt, Hobbes, and Milton has been recognized by Victoria Kahn, "Political Theology and Reason of State in *Samson Agonistes*," pp. 1065–97; compare *Wayward Contracts*, pp. 252–78, where, however, Schmitt is not mentioned until p. 278.
58. Balakrishnan, *The Enemy*, pp. 33–35, 209–25, and 241–42.
59. See the famous passage in *Political Theology*, p. 36.
60. *Meroz Cursed*, C1r. Psalm 137 features heavily in Roger L'Estrange's *Dissenters sayings the second part*, I2r–K1v.
61. C2r–v. Marshall adduces Judges 5:23 and Jeremiah 48:10, along with Psalm 137.
62. Psalm 137.8–9, qtd. from *The Bible* [Geneva] (London, 1595), 2Y2v; compare *The Holy Bible* [Bishops'], 2S5r, and *The Booke of Common Prayer*, G5r.
63. The Geneva, Bishops' Bible, and the Book of Common Prayer all read "thy."
64. H3r. See Lieb, *Poetics of the Holy*, pp. 246–312, and Burgess, "Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?" pp. 173–201.
65. Symmons, *Scripture Vindicated*, A3r–v.
66. Symmons, *Vindication of King Charles*, X3r.
67. Ross, *The Alcoran of Mahomet*.
68. Jane, *Eikon aklastos*, 2E1r.
69. Qtd. in Butler, *Hudibras*, gloss to 3.2.1102–03.
70. Butler, *Hudibras*, 3.1.1097, 1.1229–30, 1.1895–900.
71. Donne, *The Complete Poems*, "The First Anniversary," ll. 299–310; Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries*, pp. 153–54.
72. Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, I.12, 17–18; Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, pp. 183–218.
73. Osborne, *Politically Reflections upon the Government of the Turks*, A7r.
74. Derrida, "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar, pp. 230–98, 241.
75. B2r. Casaubon may follow Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 3.4.1.1, pp. 313 and 319.
76. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C.B. Macpherson, p. 139.
77. Compare *Behemoth or the Long Parliament*, pp. 3, 21–22, 53–55, and 144, and the history offered in Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, pp. 200–08.
78. *Behemoth or the Long Parliament*, pp. 4 and 119.
79. Taubes, "Statt einer Einleitung: Leviathan als sterblicher Gott," in *Religionstheorie und Politische Theologie*, Vol. 1, pp. 9–15; see also

- Harrison, *Hobbes, Locke, and Confusion's Masterpiece*, pp. 54–101 and 245.
80. Knoppers, *Historicizing Milton*; Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and his Contemporaries*, pp. 269–91; and Norbrook, “Republican Occasions in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*,” pp. 122–48. The date of *Samson* has been controversial: I read it as a post-Restoration work, at least in the form in which we have it.
81. Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 3, p. 198.
82. Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*, pp. 240–50.
83. *States of Exception*, p. 22.

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